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## Directorate of Distance Education

**B.A. (History)**

**II - Semester**

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# **HISTORY OF INDIA (FROM 1707 TO 1947 A.D.)**

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## INTRODUCTION

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### NOTES

The period between 1707 and 1947 is extremely crucial in the history of India.

The advent of the Europeans for the purpose of trading later led to the invasion of the British in India who ruled over India for a long time. During the reign of the British,

India was exploited for its economic resources to a great extent. However, their rule also led to various reforms in the social, educational, commercial and judicial spheres in India. The World War I and World War II played an important role in arousing the spirit of nationalism among people.

Various freedom fighters fought for the Independence of the country in their own way. Finally, India became independent on 15th August 1947 and became a Republic on 26th January 1950 when the Constitution of India was enforced.

This book, *History of India (From 1707 to 1947 AD)*, is written keeping the distance learning student in mind. It is presented in a user-friendly format using a clear, lucid language. Each unit contains an Introduction and a list of Objectives to prepare the student for what to expect in the text. At the end of each unit are a Summary and a list of Key Words, to aid in recollection of concepts learnt. All units contain Self-Assessment Questions and Exercises, and strategically placed Check Your Progress questions so the student can keep track of what has been discussed.

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**BLOCK - I**  
**LATER MUGHALS AND ADVENT OF**  
**THE EUROPEANS**

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*Later Mughals and the  
Rise of the Marathas*

**NOTES**

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**UNIT 1 LATER MUGHALS**  
**AND THE RISE OF THE**  
**MARATHAS**

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**Structure**

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

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The establishment of the Mughal Dynasty brought about many social and cultural changes in India. One of the last great Mughals was Aurangzeb, who had the largest area of India under his reign. Soon the religious policy adopted by him gradually distanced the loyal Hindus and Rajputs from his Empire. Around the same time, another great empire rose to power, led by Shivaji. Taking advantage of the numerous rebellions in the Mughal Dynasty, Shivaji soon overpowered them and annexed large parts of the Mughal Empire. The Mughal rulers after Aurangzeb are called the later Mughals.

With the fall of the Mughal Empire, the territories under its reign witnessed chaos and were fragmented into small princely states. Regional rulers who had till now nourished dreams of throwing out the Mughals started waging bitter wars. States like Awadh, Hyderabad, Punjab, and Mysore came to the fore. The Nawabs of Awadh and Hyderabad became mere puppets in the hands of the British. This unit deals with the rise of regional powers in

Bengal, Awadh, Punjab, Sindh, Hyderabad and Mysore. It will also discuss the rise of the Maratha Empire.

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### 1.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the rise of regional kingdoms during the 18th century
- Examine the rise and fall of the Maratha Empire
- Describe the causes and consequences of the Third Battle of Panipat

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### 1.2 LATER MUGHALS

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After the death of Aurangzeb, no new emperor arrived at the scene who could compare with the legacy of the great Mughal emperors of the past. Muhammad Shah, Ahmad Shah Bahadur, Alamgir II, Shah Alam-II, and so on, were all weak leaders who were not able to sort the rot in the empire. Over time, the power of the Mughal emperor began to weaken. With the centre weakening, regional players began to take centre stage in India. Let us discuss these various regional kingdoms that began to emerge.

#### 1.2.1 Bengal

In 1717, the Mughal emperor issued a *firman* by which it granted special benefits to the English East India Company, namely, exemption of taxes on goods imported and exported from Bengal. However, this concession did not ensure that they could trade in Bengal without paying any taxes. The Company servants like other Indian traders had to pay taxes. This misinterpretation of the *firman* became a constant cause of dispute between the Nawabs of Bengal and the Company. All the Nawabs of Bengal, beginning from Murshid Quli Khan to Alivardi Khan, refused to sympathize with the Company's misconstrued explanation of the *firman* and even forced them to pay a huge amount as indemnity if they used the *dastaks* wrongly.

In 1741, when Muhammad Shah Rangila was the Mughal sovereign, Alivardi Khan, the governor of Bengal, announced himself independent and established his capital at Murshidabad. In 1756, with Alivardi's demise and in the absence of any rightful successor, several factions vied with each other to make their chosen candidate the Nawab of Bengal. Though Alivardi wanted his grandson, Siraj-ud-Daula, son of his youngest daughter, to acquire the nawabship, the latter's succession to the throne was not accepted by other contenders, such as Shaukat Jang (*faujdar* of Purnea) and Ghasiti Begam, eldest daughter of Alivardi. In the wake of increasing court intrigues, the English East India Company took the opportunity to win factions in

their favour and work against the Nawab and thereby lead to a headlong confrontation with the Nawab.

As Bengal, in the eighteenth century, was the most prosperous province, the English East India Company considered it economically and politically extremely lucrative. Hence, it is natural that they wanted to consolidate their position further in Bengal. They wanted to base their operations in Calcutta. There were other European contenders too in Bengal, namely, the Dutch, having their factory at Chinsura and the French with their factory at Chandernagor. Siraj-ud-Daula became the Nawab of Bengal in 1756. Apart from having several foes in the family who were not happy with the succession, he was immature and lacked adequate skills to tackle the situation. In the South, the English East India Company and the French were vying against each other. Without seeking Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah's consent, the English began to build fortifications in Calcutta. They even chose to disregard the Nawab's order to curtail augmentation of their military resources and abuse the use of *dastaks* granted to them by the *firman* of 1717. Also, Company servants began misusing the concessions granted by the *firman* of 1717 by extending the privileges over their private trade too. Causing further economic loss to Bengal, the officials began to profit by selling off the *dastaks* to the Indian merchants. Another cause of discontentment towards the English for Siraj was their conscious move to give protection to Siraj's foe Krishna Das, son of Raja Rajballava. The intrigue between the Nawabs of Bengal and the British was to play a vital role in the emergence of the British as the paramount power later on in the century.

### 1.2.2 Awadh

After the waning of the Mughal Empire, the second half of the 18th century witnessed gradual expansion of the British East India Company's role in North India and this had a strong bearing on the economy and politics of Awadh. Until 1801, Awadh was treated as a buffer state protecting Bengal against the powers of the Marathas and the question of encroachment and annexation did not arise. It was only around the turn of the 19th century that Awadh became a block to further British expansion. This eventually led to the takeover of the province in 1856.

The enmity between Awadh and the English started in 1764 with the Battle of Buxar. In this battle, the English defeated the combined forces of the Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula of Awadh, Mughal emperor Shah Alam and Nawab of Bengal, Mir Qasim. After the battle, the Treaty of Allahabad was signed between the Nawab of Awadh and the British. According to this treaty, Shuja-ud-Daula was allowed to retain Awadh. However, Kora and Allahabad were ceded to the Mughal emperor. A war indemnity of ₹ 50,00,000 to be paid in instalments was imposed on Shuja who entered into a reciprocal arrangement with the company for defence of each other's territory. The Nawabs were

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aware of the company's burgeoning strength and aspirations and, like the Bengal Nawabs, they were not prepared to let go without at least a semblance of a struggle. This assumed, in the initial stages, the form of a concerted drive against British commercial penetration of Awadh. Alongside, a major reorganization and reform of the Awadh army was initiated.

The military reforms initiated by Shuja-ud-Daula after the humiliation at Buxar were not intended to either intimidate the English or promote a war against them. Rather, it would seem that the overall military effort reflected the Nawab's anxiety to defend his political authority at a time when it was being steadily undermined by the alien company. For the Company, Awadh was too important and lucrative a province to be left alone. Its vast amount of revenue could be used to subsidize the company's armies. In carefully planned stages, the company stepped up its fiscal demands. In 1773, the first definitive treaty was concluded between Awadh and the English East India Company. By this treaty, the Nawab agreed to pay ₹ 2,10,000 monthly for each brigade of company troops that would remain present in Awadh or Allahabad. This provision established the beginning of Awadh's chronic indebtedness to the Company and represented the initial British thrust into the region's political system.

It was in and after 1775 that the vulnerability of the nawabi came into sharp focus. It was also in these years, ironically enough, that the emergence of a provincial cultural identity centered on the new court and capital at Lucknow (the capital had been shifted from Fyzabad) was more clearly identifiable than before. Asaf-ud-Daula's succession to the throne in 1775 went without a hitch notwithstanding the hostility of some of Shuja's courtiers and of the opposition faction of his brother Saadat Ali, the Governor of Rohilkhand. Soon, however, under the stewardship of Murtaza Khan (Asaf's favourite who received the exalted title of Mukhtar-ud-Daula), the stability of the existing political set up was strengthened as older nobles and generals were displaced. Furthermore, Mukhtar allowed the Company to negotiate a treaty with the Nawab ceding to English control the territories surrounding Benaras, north to Jaunpur and west to Allahabad, then held by Chait Singh. The treaty also fixed a larger subsidy than before for the Company brigade and excluded the Mughal emperor from all future Anglo-Nawabi transactions. Finally all diplomatic transactions and foreign intelligence were to be controlled by the English through the resident at the Nawab's court. The disintegration of the political system, the blatant intervention of the English in Awadh's affairs and Asaf-ud-Daula's excessively indulgent disposition and disregard of political affairs alarmed a sizeable section of the Awadh nobility. The situation worsened as troops were in arrears and at places mutinied. These acts of disturbance and lawlessness smoothed the way for British intervention. In the 1770s, the English East India Company persistently eroded the basis of Awadh's sovereignty. The rapid inroads of the English made by virtue of

their military presence seriously undermined the Nawabi regime which in 1780 came up with the first declaration of protest. The supreme government in Calcutta was forced to realize that unremitting pressure on Awadh's resources could not be sustained indefinitely and that the excessive intervention of the English Resident would have to be curtailed if Awadh's usefulness as a subsidiary was to be guaranteed.

Thus, in 1784, Warren Hastings entered into a new series of arrangements with Asaf-ud-Daula which reduced the debt by ₹ 50 lakh and thereby, the pressure on the Awadh regime. In the following decade and a half, the Awadh regime continued to function as a semi-autonomous regional power whose relations with the company were cordial. This state of affairs lasted until 1797, the year of Asaf's demise, when the British once more intervened in the succession issue. Wazir Ali, Asaf's chosen successor, was deposed in favour of Saadat Ali. With Saadat Ali a formal treaty was signed on 21 February 1798 which increased the subsidy to ₹ 76 lakh yearly.

A more forward policy was initiated by Lord Wellesley who arrived in 1798 only to reject the Awadh system. The Nawab's declaration of inability to pay the increased financial demand of the company gave Wellesley a suitable pretext to contemplate annexation. In September 1801, Henry Wellesley arrived in Lucknow to force Saadat's surrender of his whole territory. After protracted negotiations, the company accepted the perpetual sovereignty of Rohilkhand, Gorakhpur and the Doab which yielded a gross amount of ₹ 1 crore 35 lakh. The annexations inaugurated anew era in Anglo-Awadh relations. The shrunken subah could no longer pose a threat to the stability of the Company dominions nor did the rulers of Awadh entertain any notion of resistance to the relentless forward march of the English. Deprived of their army and half of their territory, they concentrated their energies in cultural pursuits.

In this, they were following the footsteps of Asaf-ud-Daula, who had built up around the Lucknow court a vibrant and living cultural arena. The patronage extended to luminaries and poets like Mirza Rafi Sauda (1713-86) and Mir Ghulam Hasan (1734-86). Lucknow had been a second home for these sensitive men of letters who had left Delhi and lamented for the world they had loved and lost. The assumption of imperial status by Ghazi-uddin-Hyder (1819) and the formal revocation of Mughal sovereignty was an integral part of the blooming court culture of Awadh. But this coincided with the decline in the ruler's control over the administration and province. The heavy price that had to be continually paid to the Company for 'protection', the devolution of administrative responsibility to ministers, and the dominant position of the British Resident, were facts which no regal pomp and ceremony could conceal.

The Nawab of Awadh had many heirs and could not, therefore, be covered by the Doctrine of Lapse. Some other pretext had to be found for

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depriving him of his dominions. Finally, Lord Dalhousie hit upon the idea of alleviating the plight of the people of Awadh. Nawab Wajid Ali Shah was accused of having misgoverned his state and of refusing to introduce reforms. His state was, therefore, annexed in 1856. Undoubtedly, the degeneration of the administration of Awadh was a painful reality for its people.

### 1.2.3 Hyderabad

Six Deccan subahs of the Mughal Empire made up the area of Hyderabad. Since the Mughals were constantly involved in a struggle with the warring Marathas, they had neglected to consolidate the newly-conquered Deccan region. After Aurangzeb had died, an ambitious Zulfiqar Khan, who had hitherto been the strongest and most influential general of Aurangzeb, vowed to seize control of the Deccan subahs. To do so, he decided to befriend the Mughal enemies—the Marathas—and entered into a secret pact with them. Since Khan was a Shia Muslim, his ambition was to establish a Shia kingdom where Bijapur and Golconda had been. But he was not the only one with his eye on the coveted prize of these two states. Chin Qilich Khan (later known as Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah) was a powerful mansabdar who also wanted to set up an independent state in the Deccan.

Zulfiqar Khan and Chin Qilich Khan had been enemies for a long time, since they belonged to two warring camps in the Mughal court—Irani and Turani. However, after Aurangzeb died, Zulfiqar Khan had a slight edge because his father Asad Khan, had been the wazir in Aurangzeb's time and managed to maintain his influence for much longer after the Emperor died. Zulfiqar came even closer to realizing his ambition when in 1708, he was granted the vice-royalty of the Deccan by Bahadur Shah I. He held that post until his death in 1713 at the hands of his killer, Farrukh-Siyar.

Immediately after Aurangzeb died, as was the norm, his sons started fighting among themselves to take over the throne. However, Chin Qilich Khan remained neutral at his post in Bijapur. He was made the Governor of Awadh and *Faujdar* of Gorakhpur by Bahadur Shah on 9 December 1707. He was thus removed from Bijapur where his ambitions had lain. When Bahadur Shah eventually came close to the end of his reign, Chin Qilich Khan rejoined public service because he saw another opportunity for gaining power. However, the reigns of the Deccan were handed over to Nizam-ul-Mulk in 1713 by Farrukh-Siyar, who gave Nizam-ul-Mulk prestigious titles like Khan Khana and Bahadur Fatehjang in return for his services. The new Governor, Nizam-ul-Mulk, was an ambitious man and aspired to rule the Deccan region independently of the Mughal interference.

Nizam-ul-Mulk was a shrewd and tactful administrator. He wanted to suppress the Marathas and to do so, he put a stop to the payment of 'chauth' and incited the already proud and selfish Maratha chiefs against the Sahu. In the meantime, at the Delhi court a number of political intrigues were



brewing and as a result, Nizam-ul-Mulk was summoned from the Deccan close to the end of 1715 and replaced by Husain Ali. Nizam-ul-Mulk was sent to control Muradabad and later to Bihar. While he was still preparing to assume charge of his new duties Farrukh-Siyar fell and Nizam-ul-Mulk was transferred again, this time to Malwa. This time, he received the pledge that he would not be transferred again.

It was finally in Malwa that Nizam-ul-Mulk came into his own as a great leader. He became so popular that the Sayyid brother became jealous of him and he was summoned back to the court. However, Nizam-ul-Mulk was not happy with this decision and rebelled against it—he led the army to take control of Asirgarh in May 1720 and three days later, Burhanpur. The Sayyid brothers sent Sayyid Dilawar Ali Khan and Alam Ali Khan to overcome Nizam-ul-Mulk. However, Dilawar Ali Khan tasted defeat in June 1720 and Alam Ali Khan was killed in the battle. Husain Ali was also murdered when he was on his way to the Deccan, on 8 October 1720. Sayyid Abdullah was also killed soon after.

Once the Sayyid brothers were out of his way, Nizam-ul-Mulk appointed himself the ruler of the six subahs of the Deccan and shifted his attention to overpowering the Marathas. In February 1722, his feats were recognized by the Mughal ruler and he was granted the office of the Wazir of the Mughal Empire, which he remained until 1724. He was a strict disciplinarian and tried to rule the court with an iron hand. However, the hangers-on at the court did not like this. They spread stories about him to the king. As a wazir, his tenure was highly dissatisfying for him, even though he managed to add Malwa and Gujarat to the Deccan area.

Once he found out that he was not appreciated at the court, he left for the Deccan without taking leave of the emperor. Obviously, the emperor felt insulted and appointed Mubariz Khan as the Viceroy of the Deccan and ordered the new Viceroy to bring the Nizam to the court, dead or alive. But the Nizam was not so easily defeated and he killed Mubariz Khan and sent his head to the emperor instead. Nizam-ul-Mulk also defeated Mubariz Khan's son and overtook the reigns of Hyderabad in early 1725.

The historian, Irvine, writes, 'From this period may be dated Nizam-ul-Mulk's virtual independence and the foundation of the present Hyderabad state.' The Nizam started his rule in earnest and appointed officers for various posts, besides promoting his favourites and conferring titles upon the deserving officers. He also issued assignments on land revenue according to his own idea of administration. While in all other ways, he was like a king, he refrained from overt royal manifestations like the use of scarlet or imperial umbrella, the recitation of the Friday prayer in his own name and the issue of coins stamped with his own superscription.

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Nizam-ul-Malik was an intelligent ruler and gauged the intentions of the Marathas, specifically Peshwa Baji Rao I, to oppose his independent rule in the Deccan. He decided thus to take preventive measures. At the same time, there were many Maratha chieftains who were dissatisfied with the Peshwa and the Nizam got them to his side. The battle between the Nizam and supporters and Peshwa Baji Rao I continued for five years—from 1727 to 1732. In 1728, the Nizam was defeated at Palkhed. His main supporter, Senapati Trimbak Rao Dabhade, was killed later in 1731.

Nizam-ul-Mulk realized that he needed to negotiate a mutually beneficial treaty with the Peshwa, who also wanted peace after such a long period of strife and wanted Nizam's support for his expeditions to the north. The two leaders managed to reach a compromise in December 1732 which gave the Nizam freedom to expand his empire in the south and the Peshwa to expand his empire in the north.

When Peshwa Baji Rao I suddenly died soon after, the Nizam was summoned by the emperor and he reached Delhi in July 1737. Here, the Nizam was given the title of Asaf Jah. The Nizam then proceeded to Malwa but was overpowered by Peshwa Baji Rao near Bhopal and forced to sign a humiliating peace treaty in January 1738. The Nizam had to sign away the subedari of Malwa to Baji Rao as well as the area between rivers Narmada and Chambal.

After the attack of Nadir Shah on the Mughal India, the Nizam was summoned to Delhi by the emperor who wanted the Nizam to finalize a peace treaty with Nadir Shah. The Nizam succeeded in this task but it didn't amount to much due to the intervention of Saadat Ali Khan.

Nizam-ul-Mulk controlled the Deccan region until he died in 1748. He maintained his loyalty to the Mughal ruler and rejected Nadir Shah's offer of gaining control of the throne in Delhi. Not only was Nizam-ul-Mulk an able general and a thoughtful, progressive administrator but he was a shrewd statesman and diplomat as well. He helped to uplift the regions under his reigns financially by successfully suppressing the refractory chiefs, over-ambitious officers and robbers. He promoted trade through his measured revenue assessment and taxation policies. Religion-wise also, he was tolerant and progressive. His right hand man was Puran Chand, designated as Diwan.

After Nizam-ul-Mulk died, a war of succession followed which ultimately became interlinked with the Anglo-French dispute in the Deccan. It was finally in 1762 that India reached a level of political stability when Nizam Ali came to the throne and ruled for over 40 years. After the English East India company started to establish itself and Lord Wellesley was the administrator, the Nizam entered into a subsidiary alliance with them and became their ally.

### **1.2.4 Punjab**

Ranjit Singh made himself the master of Punjab. The first regular contact between Ranjit Singh and the British seems to have been made in 1800, when India was threatened by an invasion of Zaman Shah, the Afghan ruler who had been invited by Tipu Sultan, a bitter enemy of the British. As a precautionary measure, the British sent Munshi Yusuf Ali to the court of Ranjit Singh with rich presents to win the Maharaja over to the British side. Soon, however, he learnt that the danger of Zaman Shah's invasion receded and Yusuf Ali was recalled.

The second contact was made in 1805, when the Maratha chief Holkar entered Punjab with help from Ranjit Singh. Ranjit Singh had gone to conquer Multan and Jhang but came to Amritsar on learning about Holkar's arrival. He called a meeting of a Sarbat Khalsa to decide about the policy to be followed towards Holkar. Fateh Singh Ahluwalia and Bhag Singh of Jind advised Ranjit Singh not to come in conflict with the British by helping Holkar. Ranjit Singh told Holkar politely that he would not help him against the British. General Lake and Maharaja Ranjit Singh concluded an agreement in January, 1806.

As the danger of French invasion on India became remote, the English adopted a stern policy towards Ranjit Singh. He was given a note by the Governor General Metcalfe which contained some soft-worded warnings against his aggressive policy. Ranjit Singh was asked to restore all the places he had taken possession of since 1806 to the former possessors which will confine his army right to the bank of the Sutlej. Ranjit Singh was not prepared to accept the demand. However, he withdrew his troops from Ambala and Saniwal but continued to retain Faridkot. Ranjit Singh fortified the fort of Govindgarh. But in the last stage, Ranjit Singh changed his mind and agreed to sign the Treaty of Amritsar in 1809.

One of the effects of the treaty of Amritsar was that the British government was able to take the Sutlej states under its protection. Ranjit Singh's advance in the east was checked but he was given a *carte blanche* so far as the region to the west of the Sutlej was concerned.

The death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in June 1839 was followed by political instability and rapid changes of government in the Punjab. Selfish and corrupt leaders came to the front. Ultimately, power fell into the hands of the brave and patriotic but utterly indisciplined army. This led the British to look greedily across the Sutlej upon the land of the five rivers even though they had signed a treaty in 1809. Figure 1.1 shows a map displaying the kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

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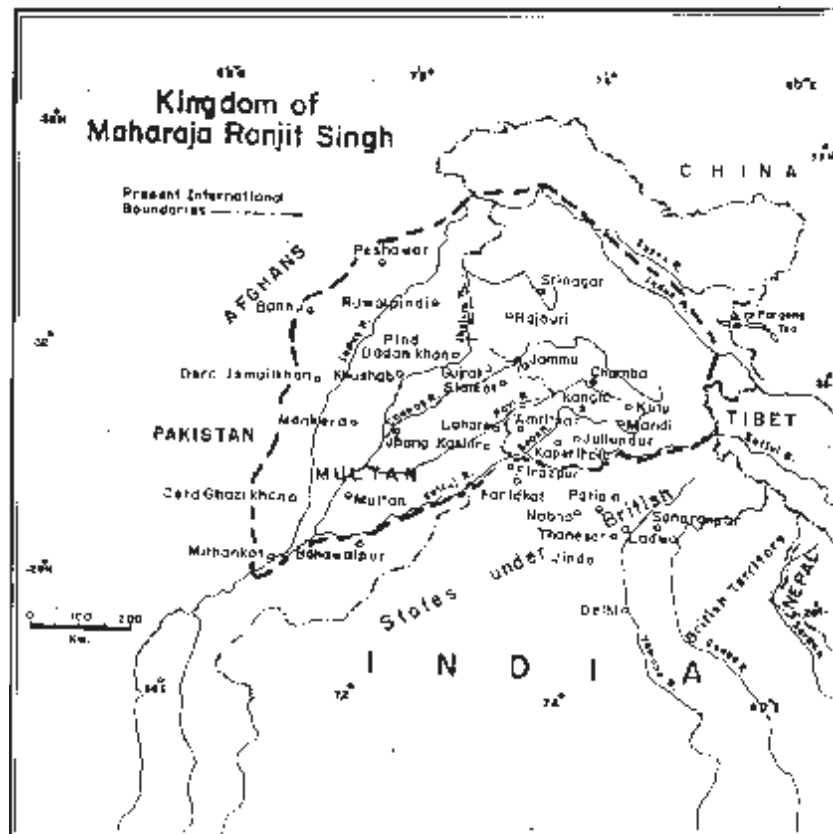


Fig. 1.1 Kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh

### First Anglo-Sikh War (1845–1846)

The First Anglo-Sikh War was fought at Mudki on 18 December 1845 and the Sikhs were defeated. The English again won the battle at Ferozepur on December 21. The Sikhs, under Ranjit Singh Majithia, however, defeated the English at Buddwal on 21 January 1846. But, the Sikhs were again defeated at Aliwal on January 28. The decisive battle was fought at Sohraon on 10 February 1846 and the Sikhs were routed. The English then crossed the Sutlej on February 13 and captured the capital of Lahore on February 20. As the Sikhs were absolutely beaten, many people advised Lord Hardinge to annex the Empire, but he did not accept this.

The war came to an end by the Treaty of Lahore which was signed on 9 March 1846. This treaty left the Sikhs with no capacity for resisting the English. Another treaty was made with the Sikhs on 16 December 1846. This treaty is known as the 'Second Treaty of Lahore' or the 'Treaty of Bhairowal'.

### Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848–1849)

The Sikhs considered their defeat in the first Sikh War as a great humiliation. They had been accustomed to victories during the time of Ranjit Singh and

this defeat gave a rude shock to their mentality. The Sikhs wanted to restore the fallen fortunes of their kingdom and the Second Anglo-Sikh War was fought between them in 1848–1849.

Lord Gough, the British Commander-in-Chief, reached Lahore with the grand army of the Punjab on 13 November. On 22 November, the rebels were defeated in a battle at Ramnagar. Another indecisive action was fought at Sadullapur on 3 December.

### **Third Anglo-Sikh War (1849)**

The third battle was fought on 13 January 1849 at Chelianwala. On 21 February, Lord Gough met the Sikhs in another battle at Derajat. The Sikhs were utterly defeated. They surrendered themselves at Rawalpindi.

The complete defeat of the Sikhs sealed the fate of their kingdom. Lord Dalhousie, on his own responsibility, annexed Punjab on 29 March 1849.

The annexation of Punjab extended the British territories in India up to the natural frontiers of India towards the northwest. Besides, after the destruction of the power of the Sikhs, there remained no active power which could pose a threat to the security of the English in India.

#### **Check Your Progress**

1. What was the firman that was issued by the Mughal emperor in 1717?
2. When did the enmity between Awadh and the English begin?

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## **1.3 RISE OF MARATHA POWER**

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Nearly three months after the Aurangzeb's death, Sambhaji's son Sahu (born on 18 May 1682) who had been in Mughal captivity since November 3, 1689 was liberated on 8 May 1707 by Aurangzeb's second son, who ascended the throne as Bahadur Shah I. Sahu was recognized as the king of the Marathas and his right to the Maratha swaraj and to *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* of the Deccani *subahs* of the Mughals was also probably recognized. The Mughal suzerainty was protected through the arrangement that he would rule as a vassal of the Empire. The intention of the Mughals was to end long-drawn wars in the Deccan or to create dissensions in the Maratha camp. Both situations were advantageous to the Mughals and they were not disappointed. Sahu's release was followed by a civil war between the forces of Tarabai and Sahu, which lasted up to 1714.

### **Balaji Viswanath (1713-1720)**

Balaji Viswanath began his career as a small revenue official and was given the title of '*Sena Karte*' (maker of the army) by Shahu in 1708. He became

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Peshwa in 1713 and made the post the most important and powerful as well as hereditary. He played a crucial role in the final victory of Shahu by winning over almost all the Maratha sardars to the side of Shahu.

He concluded an agreement with the Sayyid brothers (1719) by which the Mughal Emperor (Farukh Siyar) recognized Shahu as the king of the Swarajya. Balaji's character and capacity and the peculiar circumstances of the country favoured the rise of the Peshwas to power and renown. One of the first things Balaji was called upon to do was to secure the restoration of Sahu's mother to him from the custody of the Mughals who had detained her at Delhi as hostage for the good behaviour of her son Sahu, Balaji opened direct negotiations with the Saiyid brothers and in February 1719 all his demands were accepted.

Accordingly Sahu's mother and family was released, he was recognized as the ruler of Shivaji's home dominions and was allowed to collect *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* from the six *subahs* of the Deccan, as also in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. In return for all this, the Marathas were expected to keep a contingent on 15,000 horses in the service of the Mughals and to maintain order in the Deccan. Balaji's success in Delhi greatly increased his power and prestige. Balaji Vishwanath has been rightly called the 'second founder of the Maratha state'.

He perceived that the revival of Maratha power in its old monarchical form was no longer possible and it would be difficult to harness the nation's military resources to the common cause unless concessions were made to the great warlords who had won an important place for themselves. He made them subordinate allies or confederates of the sovereign, granting them a free hand in administering their conquests and called from them no greater sacrifice than uniting on matters of common policy. This arrangement, however, left too much authority in the hands of these chiefs, without providing for checks to call them to account, which was responsible for the speedy expansion of the Maratha power and its rapid dissolution. The term of Balaji's peshwaship marks the transition from the royal period to the age of the Peshwas.

Balaji has been credited with 'a mastery of finance'. Though constantly engaged in war and diplomacy, he took firm measures to put a stop to anarchy in the kingdom. He suppressed freebooters and restored civil government. Solid foundations were laid for a well-organized revenue system in the Swaraj territory, which was under direct royal administration.

### **Baji Rao I (1720-1740)**

Baji Rao, the eldest son of Balaji Viswanath, succeeded him as peshwa at the young age of twenty. He was considered the greatest exponent of guerrilla tactics after Shivaji and Maratha power reached its zenith under him.



Under him, several Maratha families became prominent and got themselves entrenched in different parts of India. Some of these places were as follows:

- Gaekwad at Baroda
- Bhonsles at Nagpur
- Holkars at Indore
- Scindias at Gwalior
- Peshwas at Pune

After defeating and expelling the Siddhis of Janjira from the mainland (1722), he conquered Bassein and Salsette from the Portuguese (1733). He also defeated the Nizam-ul-Mulk near Bhopal and concluded the Treaty of Durai Sarai by which he got Malwa and Bundelkhand from the latter (1737). He led innumerable successful expeditions into north India to weaken the Mughal Empire and to make the Marathas the supreme power in India.

### **Balaji Baji Rao (1740-1761)**

Balaji Baji Rao was popularly known as 'Nana Saheb'. He succeeded his father at the age of twenty. After the death of his father, the management of all state affairs was left in his hands. In an agreement with the Mughal emperor (Ahmad Shah), the peshwa (1752) was to protect the Mughal Empire from the internal and the external (Ahmad Shah Abdali) enemies in return for the *chauth*. He remained dependent on the advice and guidance of his cousin Sadashiva Rao Bhau.

With regard to the future policy of his government, he asked Sadashiva Rao Bhau to continue the policies of his father and said 'The elder Bajirao achieved great deeds in the devoted service of the king. But his life was cut short. You are his son, and you ought to consummate his policy of conquering the whole of Hindustan and establish an Empire and lead your horses beyond Attock.'

One of the earliest achievements of Nana Saheb was better financial management of the Empire by exercising careful supervision over all financial transactions. He later discussed the affairs of northern India with Holkar and Scindia and in April 1742 marched northwards to consolidate the Maratha authority in Bundelkhand. In 1743 he undertook the second expedition to the north to help Ali Vardi Khan (in Bengal) whose territories had been ravaged by Raghuji Bhonsle. The Peshwa reached Murshidabad and met Ali Vardi Khan who agreed to pay him the *chauth* for Bengal and ₹22 lakh to the Peshwa for the expenses of his expedition. By this arrangement the Peshwa freed Ali Vardi Khan's territories from the ravages of Raghuji's troops. During the first half of his Peshwaship he established Maratha supremacy in Karnataka and sent expeditions to Rajputana.

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Sahu died childless on 15 December 1749. He had nominated Ramraja, a grandson of Tarabai, as his successor before his death. Ramaraja was crowned as Chhatrapati in January 1750. Since he was weak and incompetent, Tarabai tried to make him a puppet in her own hands, which caused utter confusion and crisis in the Maratha kingdom; it deepened further when the Peshwa learnt that Ramaraja was not the grandson of Tarabai but an impostor. When this fact came to knowledge, the Chhatrapati was virtually confined in the fort at Satara and lost all contacts with political developments. Hence forth, Pune became the real capital of the Maratha confederacy and the peshwa its virtual ruler.

During the second period of Balaji's regime (1751–1761), four campaigns were organized in the north. The Punjab politics was at the time in a confused state and as a result the first two invasions of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the subahs of Lahore, Multan and Kashmir were annexed by Abdali to his dominions. After the third invasion, the Mughal wazir, Safdarjung, persuaded the Emperor to enter into an agreement with the Marathas in May 1752 for undertaking defence of the Empire against its internal and external foes. In return the Marathas were to get the *chauth* of the north-western provinces usurped and occupied by the Afghans. However, that *chauth* could only be secured by the actual conquest. The Marathas were also given the *subahs* of Agra and Ajmer. As a result of this agreement the Maratha military force was posted at Delhi and they repeatedly interfered in the politics of North India and established their supremacy at Delhi.

This arrangement would have marked the fulfillment of Balaji Baji Rao's dream of 'a Mughal–Maratha alliance for the governance of India as a whole'. But Safdarjung lost his wazirship and retired to Awadh in 1753, and power in the imperial court passed to Imad-ul-Mulk, grandson of Nizam ul-Mulk. He terrorized the helpless Emperor with Maratha help and secured the office of wazir, dethroned Ahmad Shah and placed Alamgir II, grandson of Bahadur Shah, on the imperial throne in 1754.

There was a wazir of Delhi whose rule was so barren of good result and so full of misery to himself and to the empire, to his friends and foes alike, as Imad-ul-Mulk's. At first he 'clung like a helpless infant to the breast of the Marathas'; but being unable to continue 'the cash nexus on which alone Maratha friendship depended', he agreed to Ahmad Shah Abdali's project of ousting the Marathas from the Doab and Shuja-ud-Daula of Awadh, son and successor of Safdarjung, from provincial governorship (1757). This drew Shuja-ud-Daula, Surajmal Jat and the Marathas together and left Imad-ul-Mulk utterly friendless during the absence of Abdali from India. As per the above arrangements early in 1758, Raghunath Rao, accompanied by Malhar Rao Holkar, entered the Punjab. He was joined by Adina Beg Khan and the Sikhs. Sirhind fell, Lahore was occupied and the Afghans were expelled (April 1758). Timur Shah fled, pursued by the Marathas up to the Chenab. They



did not cross the river because it was too deep for fording and the districts beyond it were inhabited mostly by the Afghans.

Raghunath Rao returned from Punjab after leaving the province in the charge of Adina Beg Khan. Confusion followed the latter's death a few months later (October 1758). The Peshwa sent a large army under Dattaji Scindia who reached the eastern bank of the Sutlej (April 1759), and sent Sabaji Scindia to Lahore to take over the governorship of the province. Within a few months, a strong army sent by Abdali crossed the Indus. Sabaji fell back precipitately, abandoning the entire province of the Punjab to the Afghans. Abdali established his government at Lahore, resumed his march and entered Sirhind (November 1759).

The Maratha adventure in the Punjab has been acclaimed by some historians as 'carrying the Hindu paramount up to Attock'. It is doubtful if the Maratha army actually advanced as far as Attock and the collection of revenue in the trans-Chenab district was a purely temporary affair. The peshwa did not realize that the Punjab could not be retained without keeping a large well-equipped force constantly on the spot. This was not possible because the necessary funds were not available and no Maratha soldier could stand the winter of Lahore. No first-rate Maratha general was posted in the Punjab as warden of the North-west frontier. The peshwa sanctioned 'a provocatively advanced frontier', which made war with Abdali inevitable, but he made no adequate arrangement for its defence.

#### **North India: Bhau's expedition (1760)**

On return towards Delhi (May 1759) after the conquest of Punjab, Dattaji Scindia was involved in hostilities with Najib-ud-Daula in Rohilkhand. He suffered defeat and retreated towards Panipat (December 1759), and heard that Abdali's forces were advancing from Sind and had occupied Ambala. His resistance failed and he was killed in a battle with Abdali at Barari, some 16 km north of Delhi (January 1760). Malhar Rao Holkar was routed by the Afghans at Sikanderabad. Thereafter the Maratha army in Hindustan ceased to exist.

When the news of these disasters reached the Peshwa at Poona, he realized that 'all his gains in North India had been wiped out, and he must again fight for the Maratha control over the Delhi Empire and build up his supremacy in Hindustan from the very foundations.' This crisis could be met only by sending a strong army to the North. Soon the Peshwa dispatched the Maratha troops under his cousin Sadashiv Rao Bhau and his eldest son Vishwas Rao. The Maratha artillery was to be commanded by Ibrahim Khan Gardi. In July 1760, the Marathas occupied Delhi. This small success added to the prestige of the Marathas, but they were friendless in the whole of North India. Even the Jat king Surajmal deserted them at the last moment. On the other hand, Ahmad Shah Abdali had been able to secure the support

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of the Ruhela Chiefs Najib-ud-daula and Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula of Awadh. During this period some futile attempts were made for peace between Ahmad Shah Abdali and the Peshwa, but they could not succeed due to the exorbitant demands of the Marathas and self-interest of the Muslim rulers. This culminated in the unfortunate and disastrous battle of Panipat. The Battle of Panipat (January 14, 1761) resulted in the death of Viswas Rao (son of Nana Saheb).

Madhav Rao (1761–1772), Narayana Rao (1772–1773), Sawai Madhav Rao (1773–1795), and Baji Rao II (1795–1818) succeeded him thereafter.

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### 1.4 MARATHA CONFEDERACY

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The word ‘confederacy’ is derived from Anglo-French word ‘*Confederate cie*’, which means a league or union, whether of states or the individuals. After the death of Shivaji in 1680, there was no great leader among the Marathas who could unite them. Sahu, the grandson of Shivaji, was under Mughal custody (between 1689 and 1707), which made him weak, passive and dependent on others. The emergence of Peshwa as the ‘de facto’ ruler is directly linked with the weak character of Sahu. When Balaji Vishwanath served as Peshwa (1713–1720), he made the king a puppet in his hands and his own post hereditary.

However, the Maratha Confederacy really began in the Peshwaship of Baji Rao I (1720–1740), son of Balaji Vishwanath, when Maratha Empire expanded in the North and South India. The Peshwa put large areas under the control of his following subordinates:

- Gwalior under Ramoji Scindia
- Baroda under Damaji Gaekwad
- Indore under Malhar Rao Holkar
- Nagpur under Raghuji Bhonsle

The Peshwa’s seat was at Pune and Sahu was relegated to being only a nominal king. The confederacy was strictly controlled by the two Peshwas:

- Baji Rao I (1720–1740)
- Balaji Baji Rao (1740–1761)

The defeat of the Marathas in the Third Battle of Panipat by the Afghan army of Ahmad Shah Abdali made the post of Peshwa very weak. He was now dependent on Phadnavis and the other Maratha chiefs.

The origin of the Maratha confederacy may be traced to the revival of the *jagir* or *saranjam* system by Rajaram. But, it was only in the time of Baji Rao I that the system made a base for itself. In this process, Sahu issued letters of authority to his various Maratha sardars for collecting *Chauth* and

*Sardeshmukhi* from various parts of India. These letters of authority were called '*saranjam*'. The holders of these *saranjams* were called *saranjamdars*. They merely recognized the Maratha Peshwas as their nominal head after the death of Sahu. In this way, arose the confederacy, consisting of very important Maratha jagirdars. Some of them were as follows:

- Raghuji Bhonsle of Berar
- Gaekwad of Baroda
- Holkar of Indore
- Scindia of Gwalior
- The Peshwa of Poona

### 1. First Anglo-Maratha War (1775-1782)

The first Anglo-Maratha War started when Raghunath Rao, after killing Peshwa Narayan Rao, claimed the post of Peshwa. But the widow of Narayan Rao gave birth to Madhav Rao Narayan. The Maratha Sardars, led by Nana Phadnavis, accepted the minor Madhav Rao Narayan as Peshwa and rejected Raghunath Rao, who in search of a friend concluded a treaty with the English at Surat on March 7, 1775. This treaty led to the first war between the British and the Marathas.

#### Causes of the first Anglo-Maratha war

The causes of the first Anglo-Maratha war were as follows:

- Friendship with Raghunath Rao
- Defeat of British by the Marathas at Talegoan (1776)
- March of British army under Goddard from Calcutta to Ahmedabad through central India (which itself was a great military feat in those days) and the brilliant victories on the way (1779–1780)
- Stalemate and deadlock for two years (1781–1782)

#### Results

The results of the first Anglo-Maratha war were as follows:

- **Treaty of Surat (1775):** Signed by Raghunath Rao, wherein he promised to hand over Bassein and Salsette and a few islands near Bombay to the British.

The provisions of the Treaty of Surat were as follows:

- o The English agreed to assist Raghunath Rao with a force of 2,500 men.
- o Raghunath Rao agreed to give Salsette and Bassein to the English and as security deposited six lakh.

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- o The Marathas would not raid in Bengal and Karnataka.
- o Some areas of Surat and Bharuch would be given to the English.
- o If Raghunath Rao decided to enter into a pact with Pune, the English would be involved.

The Calcutta Council became more powerful by the Regulating Act, 1773, than by the Government of Bombay and Madras. The Council condemned the activities of Bombay Government as 'dangerous', 'unauthorized' and 'unjust' and rejected the Treaty of Surat. It sent Lieutenant on to Pune who concluded the Treaty of Purandhar on March 1, 1776.

- **Treaty of Purandhar (1776):** Signed by Madhav Rao II; the Company got a huge war indemnity and retained Salsette.

The provisions of the Treaty of Purandhar were as follows:

- o The English and the Marathas would maintain peace.
- o The English East India Company would retain Salsette.
- o Raghunath Rao would go to Gujarat, and Pune would give him ₹2,500 per month as pension.

This time, the treaty was not acceptable to the Bombay Government, and Pune was also not showing any interest in its implementation. In the mean-time American War of Independence started (1776–1781). In this war the French supported the Americans against the English. French, who were old rivals of English East India Company, came closer to the Pune Durbar. The Court of Director of English East India Company was worried with the new political development, so it rejected the Treaty of Purandhar. The Government of Bombay was more than happy and the Calcutta Council, obviously, felt insulted. The Government of Bombay renewed its ties with Raghunath Rao (the Treaty of Surat) and a British troop was sent to Surat (November 1778) but the British troop was defeated and the Bombay government was forced to sign Treaty of Wadgaon (1779) with Pune Durbar.

### **Treaty of Wadgaon: Provisions**

The provisions of the Treaty of Wadgaon were as follows:

- The Bombay Government would return all the territories, which it occupied after 1773, to the Marathas.
- The Bombay Government would stop the English army coming from Bengal.
- Scindia would get some income from Bharuch.

Once again the treaty created a rift between the Calcutta Government and the Bombay Government. Warren Hastings, the Governor General (1773–1785), rejected the Convention of Wadgaon. An army, led by Godard,

came from Bengal and captured Ahmedabad (February, 1780) and Bassein (December, 1780). But the English army was defeated at Pune (April, 1781). Another British army led by Captain Popham came from Calcutta and won Gwalior (3 August 1780), Scindia was also defeated at Sipri (16 February 1781) and agreed to work as a mediator between the English and the Pune Durbar resulting into the Treaty of Salbai (17 May 1782).

- **Treaty of Salbai (1782):** Signed by Mahadji Scindia, whereby the British influence in Indian politics and mutual conflicts increased among the Marathas. It, however, gave the British twenty years peace with the Marathas.

The provisions of the Treaty of Salbai were as follows:

- o The British would support Rahghunath Rao, but he would get pension from Pune, the headquarters of Peshwa.
- o Salsette and Elephanta were given to the English.
- o Scindia got the land to the west of Yamuna.
- o The Marathas and the English agreed to return the rest of the areas to each other.

The Treaty of Salbai established the status quo. It benefited the company because they got peace from Marathas for the next twenty years. They could focus their energy and resources against their bitterest enemy in India, which was Mysore.

## **2. Second Anglo-Maratha War (1803-1806)**

The internal conflict of Maratha Confederacy brought them once again on the verge of war. The Peshwa, Baji Rao II, after killing Bithuji Holkar, the brother of Jaswant Rao Holkar, fled from Pune. Holkar installed Vinayak Rao as Peshwa at Pune. Baji Rao came to Bassein and signed a treaty with the English on 31 December 1802. The Company, which was always in search of such situation, made Peshwa virtually a puppet.

- **Treaty of Bassein (1802):** Signed between Baji Rao II; The treaty gave effective control of not only Maratha but also Deccan regions to the Company.

The provisions of the Treaty of Bassein were as follows:

- o The English would help Peshwa with 600 troops and artillery.
- o Peshwa agreed to cede, to the Company, territories yielding an income of 26 lakh rupees. Territories included Gujarat, South of Tapti, territories between Tapti and Narbada and some territories near Tungabhadra.
- o Peshwa promised that he would not keep any European in his army other than the English.

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- o Peshwa would give up his claim over Surat.
- o Peshwa would not have any foreign relationship with other states without the English approval.
- o Peshwa would settle all its disputes, if any, with Nizam of Hyderabad and Gaekwad of Baroda with Company's mediation.

The Peshwa, with the help of Arthur Wellesley, entered Pune on 13 May 1803 and captured it. But the Treaty of Bassein was perceived as a great insult by the other Maratha chiefs. Daulat Rao Scindia and Raghujji Bhonsle joined hands together against the British. Instead of bringing peace, this was the treaty which brought war. The war started in August 1803 from both North and South of the Maratha Kingdom. The Northern Command was led by General Lake and Southern Command by Arthur Wellesley. The British started fighting in Gujarat, in Bundelkhand and in Orissa. The strategy was to engage all the Maratha chiefs at different places, and not allow them to unite. On September 23, 1803, Arthur Wellesley defeated a joint army of Scindia and Bhonsle at Assaye, near Aurangabad. Gwalior fell on December 15, 1803. In the North, General Lake captured Aligarh in August, Delhi in September and Agra in October 1803. Scindia was defeated again at Laswari (November 1803) and lost the territory south of Chambal river. The English also captured Cuttack and succeeded in Gujarat and Bundelkhand.

This humiliating defeat forced Bhonsle and Scindia to conclude similar kind of treaty as signed by the Peshwa. On 17 December 1803, Bhonsle at Dergaon, and on 30 December 1803, Daulat Rao Scindia at Surajjarjan Gaon signed the peace treaty; Treaty of Surji-Arjangaon. Bhonsle gave Cuttack, Balasore, and Western part of Wardha River to the British. Scindia gave Jaipur, Jodhpur, North of Gohad, Ahmednagar, Bhaduch, Ajanta and all their territory between Ganga and Yamuna. Both agreed that in resolving their outstanding issues with Nizam and Peshwa, they would seek English 'help'. They agreed that they would not allow any enemy of English to stay in their territory, that they would keep a British Resident in their capital and they would accept the Treaty of Bassein. Holkar, so far aloof from the war, started fighting in April 1804. After defeating Colonel Monson in the passes of Mukund Dara near Kota, he advanced towards Delhi and made an unsuccessful attempt to seize Delhi. He was defeated at Deeg on November 13, 1804 and at Farrukhabad on November 17, 1804. Finally, he too concluded a treaty with the British on January 7, 1806 at Rajpurghat. He agreed to give up his claims to places north of the river Chambal, Bundhelkhand and Peshwa's territory. He promised not to entertain any European, other than English, in his kingdom. In return, the British promised not to interfere in the southern territory of river Chambal.

### **3. Third Anglo-Maratha War (1817–1818)**

The third Anglo-Maratha War was partly related with the British imperialistic design in India and partly with the nature of the Maratha state. In 1813, the



Charter Act was passed, which ended the monopoly of English East India Company. All the English Companies, now, were allowed to sell their products in India and purchase raw material from India. The British capitalists were in search of a greater market. Annexation of Indian territories meant a big market for British goods in India and cheap raw materials for British industries. English cotton mills were heavily dependent on Indian cotton and Deccan region was famous for cotton produce. The policy of 'non-interference', with Indian States, was no longer relevant.

The Company was in search of an excuse to wage war against the Marathas. The issue of Pindaris provided an opportunity. The Pindaris, who consisted of many castes and classes, were attached to the Maratha armies. They worked like mercenaries, mostly under the Maratha chiefs. But once the Maratha chief became weak and failed to employ them regularly, they started plundering different territories, including those territories which were under the control of the Company or its allies. The Company accused the Maratha for giving them shelter and encouragement.

Lord Hastings, the Governor-General (1813–1823), made a plan to surround the Pindaris in Malwa by a large army and to prevent the Marathas from assisting them. By the end of 1817 and early 1818, the Pindaris were hunted across the Chambal. Thousands of them were killed. Their leaders, Amir Khan and Karim Khan, surrendered while the most dangerous, Chitu, fled into the jungles of Asirgarh. The direct conflict between the English and the Marathas, however, started when Gangadhar Shastri, the ambassador of Gaekwad, was killed by Tryanbakji, the Prime Minister of Peshwa. The English Resident, Elphinston told Peshwa to hand over Trayanbakji, but he escaped. Colonel Smith besieged Pune and forced the Peshwa to sign the Pune Pact (June 13, 1817). The Maratha confederacy was dissolved and Peshwa's leadership was brought to an end. The fort of Ahmednagar, Bundelkhand and a vast territory of Malwa was ceded to the Company. The Peshwa agreed to keep English troops at Pune and his family under British custody till Triyanbankji was arrested or surrendered.

The Pune Pact was, once again, humiliating for the Marathas. The Peshwa too was unhappy. He started thinking of revenge so he burnt the British Residency and started war against the English. He was defeated at Kirki in November 1817. In the same month Appaji, the Bhonsle chief, was also defeated at Sitabaldi. In the Battle of Mahidpur (December, 1817), Holkar was defeated and was compelled to sign a treaty at Mandisor (January, 1818). He had to cede Khandesh and the vast territory across the river Narmada.

The Peshwa continued the war but he was defeated again at Koregaon (January, 1818) and finally at Ashti (February, 1818), he surrendered. A small part of his territory was given to the descendent of Shivaji, based at Satara, whereas a large part of his territory including Pune was annexed. The post of Peshwa was abandoned and Baji Rao was sent to Bithur (near Kanpur).

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An annual pension was fixed for him. With this defeat the British supremacy in Maratha kingdom was already established and the hopeful successor of Mughals lost all hopes.

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### Causes of the Third Anglo-Maratha war

The causes of the third Anglo-Maratha war were as follows:

- Resentment of the Marathas against the loss of their freedom to the British
- Rigid control exercised by the British residents on the Marathas chiefs

### Results of the Third Anglo-Maratha war

The results of the third Anglo-Maratha war were as follows:

- Dethronement of the Peshwa (he was pensioned off and sent to Bithur near Kanpur) and the annexation of all his territories by the British (the creation of the Bombay Presidency)
- Creation of the kingdom of Satara out of Peshwa's lands to satisfy Maratha pride

After this war the Maratha chiefs existed at the mercy of the British.

### Causes of the failure of Marathas

The causes of the failure of Marathas were as follows:

- **Weak rulers:** Most of the Maratha chiefs, with few exceptions, were not capable to lead the Marathas. Rulers like Daulat Rao Scindia were lovers of luxury. Besides, Maratha rulers were jealous of each other and always conspired against each other. It helped the Company's cause.
- **Nature of the Maratha state:** The Maratha state was never stable. An English historian called their state as 'robber's state'. After the death of Shivaji (1680), various Maratha chiefs carved their own independent kingdoms. During the Peshwaship of Baji Rao I (1720–1740) they were loosely attached with the Peshwa, but after the debacle of Panipat (January 14, 1761) they became enemy of each other and plundered each other's territory.
- **Low morale:** During the period of Shivaji and the Maratha war of independence, the morale of the Maratha state was very high which enabled them to resist the imperial armies of the Mughals. In the absence of strong leadership, the moral of the army was low and the soldiers often fled from the battlefield.
- **Unstable economy:** The economy of the Maratha state was not on a sound basis. Agriculture was the main source of income, but it depended on rainfall. No proper attention was paid to industry and commerce. The success of any kingdom depended heavily on its resources. The



regular civil war had ruined Maratha's agriculture, trade and industry. Plunder was their main source of income. The Maratha chiefs were always found in debt. They failed to evolve a stable economic policy. War and plunder became most sought after job for Maratha youths, but most of the time their chiefs struggled to pay them. The soldiers always shifted their loyalty. Many of them joined Company's army, where they could get a regular salary.

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- **Superior English diplomacy:** Before any war the British always made some allies and isolated the enemy. This was the policy which most of the European nations in the eighteenth and nineteenth century adopted but the English succeeded the most. In the second Anglo-Maratha war, they were allies of Peshwa and Gaekwad and in the third Anglo-Maratha war they made Scindia their ally.
- **Superior British espionage system:** The Company's espionage system had no match in Asia. They carefully recorded each and every movement of their enemies, their strengths, weaknesses, military methods etc. The entire diplomacy of the East India Company was based on the 'inputs' provided by their spies. The Marathas, on the other hand, were completely ignorant about the activities of the Company. The English learned Marathi and other India languages, but the Marathas failed to learn English. They had no knowledge about England, English people, their factories, their arms and their strategy. Wars were fought in the battlefield but strategies were made on the table which required 'inputs'.
- **The Marathas lacked national spirit:** Individually, the Marathas were clever and brave but the internal jealousies and selfish treacheries triumphed over public interest.
- **The Marathas lacked a scientific spirit:** The Marathas tried to preserve religion at the sacrifice of science. They avoided handling modern equipment for fear that they would lose their religion. They failed to develop artillery as the main support of defence.
- **Defence policy:** The Marathas recruited foreigners as soldiers to defend their country. Thus, the Maratha army lacked homogeneity. Also, they failed to develop a strong navy.
- **Superior British military organization:** The Marathas failed to adopt modern technique of warfare. Except Mahadji Scindia, no Maratha chief gave importance to artillery. He too, was dependent on French. The Pune Government set up an artillery department, but it hardly functioned effectively. The Marathas also gave up their traditional method of guerilla warfare which had baffled the Mughals. Besides, there was no motivation for the mercenary soldiers of the Marathas.

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## 1.5 THIRD BATTLE OF PANIPAT

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The conquest and occupation of the Punjab by the Marathas brought them into conflict with Ahmad Shah Abdali. The Third Battle of Panipat took place on 14 January 1761, at Panipat (Haryana). The battle pitted the French-supplied artillery and cavalry of the Marathas against the heavy cavalry and mounted artillery of the Afghans led by Ahmad Shah Durrani, also known as Ahmad Shah Abdali. The battle is considered as one of the largest battles fought in the 18th century. The battle lasted for several days and involved over 1,25,000 men. Protracted skirmishes occurred, with losses and gains on both sides. The forces led by Ahmad Shah Durrani came out victorious after destroying several Maratha flanks. The extent of the losses on both sides was heavily disputed by historians, but it is believed that between 60,000–70,000 were killed in fighting, while number of the injured and prisoners taken vary considerably. The result of the battle was the halting of the Maratha advances in the north.

### Causes of Third Battle of Panipat

The causes of the Third Battle of Panipat were many. Some of them were as follows:

- **Invasions of Nadir Shah:** Nadir Shah defeated the Mughal troops near Karnal. Then he marched to Delhi, where he stayed for 57 days. He took away the accumulated wealth of 348 years and the famous Peacock Throne from Delhi. The invasion of Nadir Shah exposed the weakness of Mughal Empire. It encouraged the Afghans to invade India.
- **Ambitions of Ahmad Shah Abdali:** He was an ambitious ruler and a gallant soldier. He dreamt to be the ruler of India and was not satisfied by merely plundering raids.
- **Attack of Maratha army on Punjab:** Maratha army attacked those regions which belonged to the heirs of Nadir Shah. Ahmad Shah Abdali wanted to teach lesson to the Marathas and break their power.
- **Internal disputes:** The internal disputes were also responsible for foreign invasion. Ahmad Shah Abdali took full advantage of the internal disputes. The Mughals, Rajputs, Rohillas and the Marathas have not combined together to face their common enemy. Had they combined together it would have been not so easy for Abdali to crush Marathas. The Marathas had interfered in the internal affairs of the Rajputana states (present day Rajasthan) and levied heavy taxes and huge fines on them. They had also made huge territorial and monetary claims upon Awadh. Their raids in the Jat territory had resulted in the loss of trust of Jat chiefs like Suraj Mal. They had, therefore, to fight their enemies

alone. The main reason for the failure of Marathas was that they went to war without good allies.

- **Distance of Punjab from south:** Though Marathas had conquered portions of Punjab but it was difficult to rule on Punjab from south because Marathas did not want to be away from their homes in the south. It made the task of recapturing of lost territories by Ahmad Shah easier. The Marathas did not care to defend northern frontier properly. Had the Marathas settled in Punjab, Abdali's success would have been doubtful.
- **Maratha relation with Ruhelas:** Marathas did not have good relations with Ruhelas because the Mughals had gained support from Scindia and Holker against Ruhelas. Under these circumstances, the Ruhelas invited Ahamad Shah Abdali to invade India.
- **Strong position of Afghans:** After the murder of Nadir Shah, Abdali ascended the throne and improved his power. In a short period of one year, he was strong enough to invade India again and again.
- **Dream of the Marathas to establish a Hindu State:** Knowing the weaknesses of the Mughals, they thought it is practicable to establish a Hindu State on the ruins of the Mughal Empire. But Abdali never wanted that their dreams should be materialized.

### **Third Battle of Panipat (1761)**

At Panipat, the two rival armies stood entrenched, face to face, for more than two months. There were skirmishes and minor battles. The Afghan cavalry patrols dominated the environs of the Maratha camp and cut off its communications and also food supply. Gradually, despair and terror seized the straying Marathas. They decided to launch a direct attack on the Afghans when there was no food for men and no grass for horses, and when filth and stench 'made the confines of the entrenchment a living hell'.

The Bhau's army marched out to battle on January 15, 1761. The battle actually began about four hours after daybreak. Vishwas Ruo was shot dead at quarter past two. Soon after, the Bhau was also killed. Among the leading chiefs who met death were Jankoji Scindia, Tukoji Scindia and Ibrahim Khan Gardi. Mahadji Scindia received wounds, which claimed his life. 'It was a nation-wide disaster like a flooded field. An entire generation of leaders was cut off at one stroke. Apart from those who fell on the field, many fugitives lost their lives during their long flight without food or rest. About 50,000 men and women were saved by the kindness and hospitality of Suraj Mal.

The crushing defeat of the Marathas is easily explained. Numerically, the Afghans had considerable superiority. Against 60,000 Afghans and their Indian allies actually present in the field, supported by 80,000 behind the fighting line, the Bhau had 45,000 troops in the field and 15,000 Pindaris in

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the rear. The Afghan army had better training and discipline, and it was better organized. Moreover, a famished army on less than half-dead country mares met the finest Afghan cavalry. Abdali had superiority in artillery; he employed 'the most efficient mobile artillery known in that age'. Although the field guns of the Marathas were of larger caliber than those of the Afghans, they could not be dragged forward with the advancing troops and became useless as the battle developed. The Bhau had no worthy and dependable lieutenants as comparable to Abdali's front-rank officers. Malhar Rao Holkar did not exchange fire till after the contest at the centre had been decided in Abdali's favour; and at the last stage he fled away. Abdali was a far greater military leader and strategist than the Bhau. The defeat became virtually inevitable after the Bhau's postponement of battle for two and a half months. He kept his army on the defensive in a besieged camp until starvation compelled him to make the last desperate effort for escape.

From the political point of view the defeat was largely due to the alienation of the Rajputs and the Jats and the failure to neutralize Shuja-ud-Daula and Najib-ud-Daula. While half of Abdali's army was composed of troops furnished by his Indian allies, the valiant Rajputs and the Jats did not fight on the Maratha side. The clue to this situation lies in 'the total diplomatic failure on the part of the Peshwa who dictated, and the Bhau who carried out, his North Indian policy'.

### **Consequences of Third Battle of Panipat**

Some modern Maratha writers argue that although the Marathas suffered terrible losses in manpower at Panipat, the battle did not destroy the Maratha power in North India nor did it essentially shake the Maratha Empire as a whole. Abdali made several unsuccessful efforts to conclude peace with the Peshwa and Surajmal, and in the following years he failed to crush the Sikhs in the Punjab. There was a revival of the Maratha power in North India under Peshwa Madhav Rao I (1761–1772). After the death of Najib-ud-daula (1770) who 'administered Delhi as Abdali's agent after Panipat, the Marathas restored the exiled Mughal emperor Shah Alam II to the capital of his ancestors (1772). Mahadji Scindia occupied Delhi in 1788 and it was from his successor Daulat Rao Scindia that the English wrested the imperial capital in 1803. In South India the Marathas secured victories against Haider Ali and the Nizam, S.G. Sardesai maintains that 'the disaster at Panipat was indeed like a natural visitation destroying life, but leading to no decisive political consequences'. But the views of Sardesai and the others were too simplistic. Undoubtedly the disaster at Panipat was the greatest loss to the Marathas in manpower and personal prestige both. The Maratha dream of being a successor to the great Mughals was lost forever. Certainly Panipat paved the way for the rise of the British power, which became a paramount power in India by the close of the eighteenth century.

Peshwa Balaji Bajirao could not bear the shock of the awful catastrophe at Panipat and died six months after the battle (June 1761). During the post-Panipat era, the links of the Peshwa with the Maratha Confederacy also grew very loose. In the words of Kashiraj Pandit, who was an eyewitness to the Third Battle of Panipat, 'It was verily doomsday for the Maratha people'.

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### **Peshwa Madhav Rao I (1761-1772)**

After the death of Balaji Bajirao, his younger son Madhav Rao was placed on the Peshwa's *gaddi*. Since the new Peshwa was only seventeen years old, his uncle Raghunath Rao, the eldest surviving member of the Peshwa's family, became his regent and the *de facto* ruler of the state. During this period, serious differences broke out between the Peshwa and his uncle, leading to war between the two in 1762, in which the Peshwa's army was defeated. For some time a reconciliation was arrived at between the Peshwa and his uncle, but soon serious differences again erupted. In 1765, Raghunath Rao demanded the partition of the Maratha state between himself and the Peshwa. In the meantime, when the Maratha state was paralysed by the internal strife, Haider Ali of Mysore ravaged the Maratha territories in Karnataka; but the first Anglo-Mysore war involved Haider Ali in a greater crisis. During this period, the Marathas tried to restore their lost position in North India. In January 1771, Mahadji Scindia occupied Delhi and succeeded in exacting money from the leading Rajput princes; but the premature death of Madhav Rao in November 1772 placed the Maratha dominion in a deep crisis. Madhav Rao was the last great Peshwa, had he survived longer, the Maratha Empire could have been saved from disaster.

After Madhav Rao's death the fortunes of the Maratha Kingdom and the prestige of the Peshwas under Narayan Rao (1772–1774), Madhav Rao Narayan (1774–95) and Bajirao rapidly declined, owing to their internal feuds and prolonged wars with the English. The last Peshwa surrendered to the English and the Peshwaship was abolished.

### **Effects and Importance of the Third Battle of Panipat**

The effects and the importance of the Third Battle of Panipat were as follows:

- **Loss of the wealth and human power:** The Third Battle of Panipat decided the fate of India. In this battle the loss of money and life was enormous. It was a nationwide disaster. It was stated that—two pearls had been dissolved, twenty seven gold mohars had been lost and the loss of silver and copper could not be reckoned.
- **End of Maratha confederacy:** The decisive battle of Panipat completely destroyed the Maratha Confederacy. It destroyed the central organization of the Marathas. After this battle Maratha's central power became weak.

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- **Decentralization of Maratha power:** The Third Battle of Panipat also brought about the decentralization of the Maratha power. The power of Marathas was scattered and divided. Maratha leaders established their independent kingdoms. Scindias were wounded in the battle field. They established their independent kingdom and made Gwalior centre of their kingdom.
- **Downfall of Mughal Empire:** The Third Battle of Panipat was the last and final blow to the staggering Mughal power. It hastened its decline and paved the way for British supremacy.
- **Freedom of Rajputs:** After the Battle of Panipat the Marathas lost their hold over the Rajputana. The Rajputs regained their freedom. They did not support Marathas either against Ahamad Shah Abdali or Britishers.

### **Causes of the Failure of Marathas in Panipat**

The causes that led to the failure of Marathas in Panipat were as follows:

- The main reason of the failure of the Marathas was Abdali's superior strategy and novel tactics and superiority of arms and ammunitions. Though Sada Shiva Rao was a brave and capable leader but he lacked the maturity and experience of Abdali.
- The Marathas had made Jats and Rajputs their enemy while Abdali was supported by Ruhelas and others. It was total diplomatic failure on the part of the Peshwa who dictated, and the Bhau who carried out, his North Indian policy.
- Marathas had neither adequate force nor a good supply of quality horses or seasonal troops.
- The Marathas had terrible want of food and adequate clothing. Starved and barebacked on the bitter cold of January many of them fell sick or even died.
- The absence of Duttaji from this fateful fight was a serious handicap to the Marathas.
- Marathas had used guerrilla warfare in North India. Though their infantry was based on the European style contingent and had some of the best French made guns of the times, their artillery was static and lacked mobility against the fast moving Afghan forces.

### **Marathas under Mahadji Scindia and Nana Phadnavis**

Mahadji Scindia and Nana Phadnavis were contemporaries and both of them played an important role during the first Anglo-Maratha war and came into prominence in Maratha politics. Nana Phadnavis controlled the Maratha



affairs at Poona and Mahadji Scindia busied himself in the north. Both of them served the Maratha state faithfully. It is pointed out by Sardesai that if Mahadji Scindia and Nana Phadnavis had not acted in concert and brought all the resources to bear on the First Maratha war, there would have been an end of Maratha power.

Mahadji Scindia and Nana Phadnavis worked in close co-operation during the First Anglo-Maratha war, faced the British challenge united and succeeded in thwarting the British design to curb the Marathas. But Mahadji Scindia entered into the treaty of Salbai without the concurrence of Nana Phadnavis. By this treaty Mahadji Scindia became virtually independent and was recognized by the East India Company as mediator between it and Peshwas and guarantor of the honourable peace with the Marathas.

Mahadji and Nana Phadnavis had different physical features and mental cast. The life of Mahadji was a long period of strenuous activity. His life can be divided into four parts. During the first part up to 1761, he was an obscure figure over-shadowed by his brilliant brothers. From 1761 to 1772 his life was one of the apprenticeship in which he acquired the supreme fitness, which later on helped him to co-operate with Nana Phadnavis to defeat the English during the first Anglo-Maratha war. During the third part, he gained valuable experience of war and diplomacy on his own initiative which he put in actual test later on. During the fourth part he created the kingdom which he left for his children.

The private life of Mahadji was pure and free from blemish. He was free from caste and religious bias. He was equally respected by the Muslims and the Hindus. He employed Brahmans, Marathas and Mahars. The Saraswat Brahmans attained special distinction in his service as soldiers and diplomats.

Mahadji was always careful and faithful to the Peshwa family. He never tried to assert his independence. It was unfortunate that Nana Phadnavis was jealous of Mahadji and always tried to keep him away from Poona. Mahadji did not manage his financial affairs properly. He borrowed a large amount of money from all sources. A lot of money was pocketed by unscrupulous middlemen. There was confusion and misappropriation. Money was poured into useless channels. Lands were deserted and cultivation was stopped at many places. Robberies became frequent. Life became insecure. Mahadji agreed to pay the expenses of the Mughal armies but he had no money to do so.

Nana Phadnavis was born in 1742. He worked very hard at his desk. He attended to all the details of the administration. He did not like the open methods of Mahadji and always worked in secret. He was usually reasonable and fair in his dealings. He was afraid to commit treachery or wrong. He was strict in punctually carrying on work. However he did not possess self-confidence of Mahadji. He took counsel with all separately, but acted

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according to his own considered judgment. He was not at all loved as he was a stern task master. He was often in danger of assassination. On about 20 occasions, he had miraculous escape from attempts on his life.

Nana Phadnavis lacked military leadership and that was a great disadvantage in the rough times in which he lived. Nana Phadnavis did not possess a conciliatory spirit. He gradually removed all the members, one by one, of the Bara-Bhai council and concentrated all the power in his own hands. If, instead of that, Nana Phadnavis had shared powers with others, there would have been better prospects for the future of the Marathas. It has been suggested that if Nana Phadnavis had taken into confidence all the Maratha chiefs and pooled together all the resources of the Marathas, the Marathas would not have fallen as they did under Bajirao II.

According to Sardesai, Nana would have acquired a much higher place in history if he had subordinated his love of power and money to the service of the nation.

Nana had too much love for power. It is suggested that if he had retired from politics in 1795, he would have rendered a great service to the Maratha cause. Another criticism against Nana is that he loved money too much.

### Check Your Progress

3. Who is considered the greatest exponent of guerrilla tactics after Shivaji under the Marathas?
4. What were the causes of the third Anglo-Maratha war?
5. When did the Third Battle of Panipat take place?

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## 1.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. In 1717, the Mughal emperor issued a *firman* by which it granted special benefits to the English East India Company, namely, exemption of taxes on goods imported and exported from Bengal.
2. The enmity between Awadh and the English started in 1764 with the Battle of Buxar. In this battle, the English defeated the combined forces of the Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula of Awadh, Mughal emperor Shah Alam and Nawab of Bengal, Mir Qasim.
3. Baji Rao was considered the greatest exponent of guerrilla tactics after Shivaji and Maratha power reached its zenith under him.



4. The causes of the third Anglo-Maratha war were as follows:
  - Resentment of the Marathas against the loss of their freedom to the British
  - Rigid control exercised by the British residents on the Marathas chiefs
5. The Third Battle of Panipat took place on 14 January 1761, at Panipat (Haryana).

## NOTES

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### 1.7 SUMMARY

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- After the death of Aurangzeb, no new emperor arrived at the scene who could compare with the legacy of the great Mughal emperors of the past.
- In 1741, when Muhammad Shah Rangila was the Mughal sovereign, Alivardi Khan, the governor of Bengal, announced himself independent and established his capital at Murshidabad.
- As Bengal, in the eighteenth century, was the most prosperous province, the English East India Company considered it economically and politically extremely lucrative. Hence, it is natural that they wanted to consolidate their position further in Bengal.
- The enmity between Awadh and the English started in 1764 with the Battle of Buxar. In this battle, the English defeated the combined forces of the Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula of Awadh, Mughal emperor Shah Alam and Nawab of Bengal, Mir Qasim.
- The First Anglo-Sikh War was fought at Mudki on 18 December 1845 and the Sikhs were defeated.
- Baji Rao, the eldest son of Balaji Viswanath, succeeded him as peshwa at the young age of twenty. He was considered the greatest exponent of guerrilla tactics after Shivaji and Maratha power reached its zenith under him.
- The first Anglo-Maratha War started when Raghunath Rao, after killing Peshwa Narayan Rao, claimed the post of Peshwa.
- The third Anglo-Maratha War was partly related with the British imperialistic design in India and partly with the nature of the Maratha state.
- The Third Battle of Panipat took place on 14 January 1761, at Panipat (Haryana). The battle pitted the French-supplied artillery and cavalry of the Marathas against the heavy cavalry and mounted artillery of the Afghans led by Ahmad Shah Durrani, also known as Ahmad Shah Abdali.

- The forces led by Ahmad Shah Durrani came out victorious after destroying several Maratha flanks.

## NOTES

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### 1.8 KEY WORDS

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- **Nawab:** It refers to a native governor during the time of the Mogul empire.
- **Confederacy:** It is derived from Anglo-French word ‘*Confederate cie*’, which means a league or union, whether of states or the individuals.
- **Firman:** It refers to a royal order bearing the seal of the emperor.
- **Espionage:** It means the practice of spying or of using spies, typically by governments to obtain political and military information.

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### 1.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short Answer Questions

1. Discuss the causes of the First Anglo-Maratha War.
2. Describe the various Anglo-Sikh Wars.
3. What were the consequences of the Third Battle of Panipat?

#### Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the rise of the regional kingdoms of Bengal and Awadh.
2. Explain the rise of the Maratha Empire.
3. Examine the causes for the failure of the Marathas in the Third Anglo-Maratha War.

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### 1.10 FURTHER READINGS

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## UNIT 2 ADVENT OF THE EUROPEANS

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### NOTES

#### Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Coming of the Europeans
- 2.3 The Portuguese
  - 2.3.1 Factories, Fortresses and Commercial Arrangements
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  - 2.5.1 The French
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### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

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In the previous unit, you learnt about the rise of the regional kingdoms in India in the 18th century. With the decline of the Roman Empire, around the 7th century, the commercial contact between the East and the West suffered. The geographical discoveries in the last quarter of the 15th century deeply affected the commercial relations of different countries of the world and produced far-reaching consequences in their history. The European nations now embarked on finding a new sea route towards the East. The first efforts were made by the Portuguese. Prince Henry of Portugal, nicknamed the 'Navigator', devoted his whole life to encouraging voyages for the discovery of a sea route to India.

In 1487, Bartholomew Diaz reached the Cape of Good Hope, and following his route Vasco da Gama, another Portuguese navigator, reached the shores of Calicut in 1498. Thus, the long-sought direct trade link with India was discovered. There was perhaps no event during the middle age, which had such far-reaching repercussions on the civilized world as the opening of the sea route to India.

After the discovery of India by Vasco Da Gama, the Portuguese tried to establish a trade link and their rule in India. Later, the Dutch, English and

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the French companies came to India. The Dutch diverted their attention to Indonesia and Portugal. Since they were unable to compete with the English and the French companies, their rule became confined to Dadar, Goa, Daman and Diu.

In this unit, you will study about the advent of the Europeans—the Portuguese and the Dutch, and the British East India Company and the French. You will also study the reasons that led to the Anglo-French rivalry.

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### 2.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the arrival of the Europeans in India
- Discuss how trade played an important role in the expansion of Portuguese power in the east coast of India
- Interpret the process of Dutch settlements in India
- Explain the reasons for the Anglo–French rivalry
- Summarize the causes of conflict between the French and the British

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### 2.2 COMING OF THE EUROPEANS

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The sea route from Europe to India was discovered by Vasco Da Gama, a Portuguese explorer. He reached the Port of Calicut on 17 May 1498 and was received by the Hindu ruler of Calicut, the Samudiri, who was known by the title of Zamorin. This led to the establishment of the Portuguese trading stations at Calicut, Cochin and Cannanore. Cochin was the early capital of the Portuguese in India. Later, Goa became its capital and the Portuguese became a significant naval power on the Indian waters.

After the discovery by Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese made a lot of efforts to use the commercial potentialities of Asia, especially India. Local rulers who were ruling at that time allowed them to set up factories for the development of trade and commerce. They initiated propagation of the Christian faith, inter-marriages, conversions and settlements of the Europeans. New social groups emerged due to these activities. Many rulers made political and commercial alliances with them. When other European nations saw the successful commercial activities of the Portuguese, they also felt encouraged to indulge in trading activities with Asia. Many European powers came to India, but you will study about two prominent powers—the Portuguese and the Dutch.

**Check Your Progress**

1. Who discovered the sea route to India?
2. Name the early capital of Portuguese India?
3. When did Vasco Da Gama reach the port of Calicut?

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**2.3 THE PORTUGUESE**

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The discovery of the sea route to India by Vasco Da Gama, one of the most successful explorers in the Age of Discovery and the commander of the first ships to sail directly from Europe to India, ushered the era of the Portuguese trade in India. He returned to Portugal from India in 1499, with cargo worth sixty times his expenses. Zamorin treated the Portuguese mariner in a friendly manner, which encouraged them to open up commercial relations with Calicut within two years. In 1502, he established a factory at Cochin. The king of Cochin let Vasco Da Gama build the first fort. He was followed by Alfonso de Albuquerque, who arrived in India in 1503.

In 1505, the Portuguese appointed a governor named Francisco de Almeidato who used to look after their affairs in India. He built forts at Anjadiva, Cannanore and Cochin. Alfonso de Albuquerque was the real founder of the Portuguese Empire in the East. In 1510, Albuquerque occupied the port of Goa from the Bijapur Sultan by a sudden attack and arranged for its defence by strengthening its forts. He was a capable ruler and played an important role in the abolition of the 'sati' system.

Albuquerque encouraged the Portuguese men to marry Indian women so that he could establish the authority of the Portuguese in India. He, however, ill-treated the Muslims. When Albuquerque died in 1515, the Portuguese had established themselves as the strongest naval power in India.

Nino da Cunha (1529–1538) transferred his capital from Cochin to Goa (1530) and acquired Diu and Bassein (1534) from Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. The famous Jesuit Saint Francisco Xavier arrived in India with Martin Alfonso de Souza during this time (1542–1545). Under Albuquerque's successors, the Portuguese occupied Diu, Daman, Salsette, Bassein, Chaul and Bombay, San Thome (near Madras) and Hugli (in Bengal).

Portuguese occupation of Diu compelled the Arabs to withdraw from the Indian trade. The Arab merchants of Calicut were apprehensive of the Portuguese designs from the very beginning. The Zamorins, the hereditary royal title used by the Hindu rulers of the medieval Kingdom of Calicut, supported them against the Europeans. On the other hand, Calicut's rivalry with Cannanore and Cochin forced them to cultivate friendship with the

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Portuguese. Besides, they forced Cochin to sell all its products through Calicut. To retaliate, this was an apt opportunity for Cochin. Its ruler allowed the Europeans to establish a factory in Cochin. The Portuguese exploited the situation to their advantage. They realized that Calicut was a major hindrance in controlling the Malabar trade. Hence, throughout the 16th century, the Portuguese carried on armed clashes against Calicut. With a view to driving out the Portuguese, the Zamorins allied with Bijapur, Gujarat, Ahmednagar and Egypt. However, they did not succeed. At any rate, the Zamorins continued to harass the Portuguese on land. Even on the seas the Portuguese found it difficult to destroy Calicut's naval power, which was organized under the celebrated Marakkhar family of admirals. From 1528 to 1598, the Portuguese–Zamorin clashes were mainly confined to the seas. It was only in 1599 that the Portuguese succeeded in making a breakthrough against the Marakkars.

The Portuguese control was effective at only those places where they had built their fortresses. But their highhandedness and cruelty compelled even these allies to part with them in spite of their traditional rivalries with Calicut. For example, the Cannanore rulers, who supported the Portuguese against Calicut in the early years, later supported the Zamorin in 1558 against the Portuguese. Similarly the King of Tanur, who had become a Christian and supported the Portuguese against Calicut, turned his back to the Europeans. In fact, it was only Cochin and Quilon with whom Portuguese succeeded in maintaining a lasting friendship.

Portuguese settlements on the west coast consisted of the following places:

- Calicut (1500)
- Cochin (1501)
- Cannanore (1503)
- Quilon (1503)
- Cheliyam (1531)
- Rahole (1535)
- Kregannore (1536)
- Mangalore (1568)
- Hanawer (1568)
- Diu (1509)
- Goa (1510)
- Surat (1599)
- Daman (1599)

Portuguese settlements on the east coast consisted of the following places:

- Meliyapur
- Chittagong
- Hugli
- Bandel

The Portuguese power continued to be strong till the middle of the 16th century but with the death of Governor D.J. Castro, the Portuguese power in India began to decline.

### 2.3.1 Factories, Fortresses and Commercial Arrangements

The Italian merchants had established warehouses (factories) in Cairo and Alexandria to carry on trade and commerce. Following this example the Portuguese, too, founded factories on the coastal regions of India and certain other places in Asia. A factory could be defined as a commercial organization having an autonomous existence set up within the country with which another country had commercial relations. Each factory had an officer who was assisted by a number of persons appointed by the Portuguese king. He was the agent of the crown to promote economic, financial and administrative activities of all sorts. In all situations Portuguese national interests were of paramount consideration. Factories also required protection from hostile elements. Therefore, to consolidate and strengthen their power the Portuguese also attempted to fortify their factories. A chain of factories and fortresses came into existence for the support of the maritime trade conducted by the Portuguese. These fortified centres were expected to serve the Portuguese to check the movements of vessels owned by others and to function as areas for the reserve of military and naval forces. The system of factories had a great role to play in the commercial arrangements in the period beginning with the 16th century till the mid-18th century.

#### Western India

In the Malabar region, the Portuguese established their first factory in 1500 at Calicut. However, it could not run for a long time because the Zomorins were against the establishment of such factories. In 1525, finally, the Portuguese closed down their factory at Calicut. This did not stop the Portuguese to establish factories in other places, thus, they established factories in other places such as Cochin (1501), Cannanore (1503), Quilon (1503), Chaliyam (1531), Rachol (1535) Crangannore (1536), and Mangalore and Honaver (1568). Later, in the second decade of the 16th century, NizamulMulk of Ahmednagar granted the permission to the Portuguese to construct a factory at Chaul.

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In the north-west, Cambay (Khambayat) was the main port of call on the route from Malacca connecting Calicut, the ports of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf with the ports of the Mediterranean. Apart from this, factories were established by the Portuguese at Diu (1509, 1535), Bassin (1534), Surat, Daman (1599) and Bhavnagar. Thus, almost the entire coastal belt of Malabar, Konkan and north-west India came under the influence of the Portuguese.

### **Eastern India**

The Portuguese navigators came across several merchants from the eastern coast of India who had trade relations with other South-East Asian centers. The Portuguese collected textiles and other commodities from various port-towns of the Coromandel Coast. Some of these port-towns were Masulipatnam, Pulicat, San Thome, Pondicherry, Cuddalore, Porto Novo and Nagapatnam.

Meilapore known as San Thome to the north of Nagapatnam was also a Portuguese settlement, which was surrounded by walls. The Portuguese also established a fortress at Manar in 1518 on the western coast of Ceylon. This fortress, though not on the main land of India, could contain the movement of vessels to the east from the western side of the subcontinent.

The Portuguese also tried to establish commercial contacts with Bengal from AD 1517. The first effort in this direction was made at Chittagong—the chief port of Bengal during this period. After much manoeuvring, they at last obtained permission from Mahmud Shah, the king of Bengal, to establish factories at Chittagong and Satgaon in 1536. The second settlement at Hugli was granted to the Portuguese by Akbar in 1579–1580. The third one was established at Bandel with the permission of Shah Jahan in 1633. Yet, during the 16th century there were no fortresses on the eastern coast. Still the settlements, with a few artilleries, were able to oversee the movement of vessels carrying commodities.

### **South-East Asia**

With a view to having an exclusive domination over the trade in the Indian Ocean regions, the Portuguese found it necessary to bring under their control the important trade centres in South-East Asia.

They established a few fortresses at Colombo and Batticaloa—all in Ceylon. Subsequently, contacts with Java, Siam, Moluccas, Martaban and Pegu were established. From 1518, the Portuguese started a settlement in China on the island of Sancheu. It was here that St. Francis Xavier, a Christian missionary, died in 1552.

The beginning of factories in various parts of the subcontinent of India and neighbouring Asiatic kingdoms provided an environment suitable for long distance trade to the Portuguese.

### 2.3.2 Commodities of Export and Import

The chief aim of the Portuguese in discovering the sea route connecting the East with Portugal was to collect spices directly from the places of production rather than from the hands of the intermediaries like the Italian or the Muslim traders. Pepper became a necessary ingredient in European food. The demand for pepper went on increasing, especially for the sake of preserving meat. Besides, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, mace, nutmeg and several exotic herbs from the East had a market in Europe.

A special variety of textiles like muslin and chintz and few animals like elephants, too, found their way to Portugal. The commodities which the Portuguese had were not acceptable to eastern nobility, thus, they did not have sufficient commodities to give in exchange to acquire commodities available in the East. They bought silver from the West so that they could buy commodities of the East.

Pepper was the most popular commodity which was traded from Malabar and the Konkan coasts. Ginger, white sandalwood, red sandalwood, sealing wax, indigo, spikenard, tamarind, areca nut, textiles, ivory and turmeric were also traded from the Malabar Konkan coasts to Portugal. In 1498, the Zamorin of Calicut asked Vasco da Gama to send gold, silver, coral and scarlet from Portugal. This shows that these commodities were imported to the Malabar and Konkan coasts.

In 1513, Alfonso de Albuquerque gave a list of commodities to the king of Portugal which he felt could be sold in India. This included items like coral, copper, quicksilver, vermilion, velvet, carpets, saffron, rose-water and clothes of various kinds. All these items were not from Portugal, but the Portuguese started procuring them from various places, like Flanders, Germany, England and other European countries.

Indigo, textiles, silk, handicrafts made of tortoise shells, taffeta, satin, chintz, *malmal*, and tripped cotton clothes were some of the things that were exported to Portugal. Among these items, silks were produced in places like Burhanpur and Balaghat, chintz in Cambay, sandalwood in Coromandel, spikenard in Bengal, calico in the vicinity of Daman, Cambay and Balaghat. The volume of export of textile products increased in the 17th century. Copper, broadcloths and cash in various denominations were sent to north-western coast. In addition to this, a few products such as pepper and other spices from the South were also taken to north-western India for the purchase of textiles. The most expensive item of export from this region was pearl, chiefly collected from the pearl fishery coast. Cotton and silk textiles and embroideries from Bengal were exported to the Portuguese. Ginger in conserve, myrobalans, butter, oil, wax and rice were the other commodities that were collected from Bengal.

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The Portuguese brought brocades, damasks, satins, taffetas, cloves, nutmegs, mace, camphor, cinnamon, pepper, chests, writing desks, valuable pearls and jewels to Bengal. Most of these were from Malacca, China, Borneo, Ceylon and Malabar Coast. Sea-shells or cowries from Maldives, white and red sandalwood from Solor and Timor were also taken to Bengal by the Portuguese.

Various types of spices were collected from Ceylon and other South-East Asian regions. For example, Malacca and Java produced pepper for export. Moluccas produced good variety of cloves. The best sort of cinnamon was produced by Ceylon for export to Lisbon. Timor and Tennaserim produced good variety of sandalwood, which was carried by the Portuguese to Lisbon. Sumatra provided sealing wax for Portuguese consumption. Borneo, Sumatra and China produced good variety of camphor for export to Lisbon. Benzoin from Pegu was also taken by the Portuguese to Portugal. Rhubarb was carried by the Portuguese from China.

In return, the Portuguese took gold, silver, cash and textiles to South-East Asian regions. Most of these textile goods were manufactured in India.

### **Finances of the Portuguese trade**

Taking into account the details of the Portuguese enterprise on the Malabar coast in the period between 1500 and 1506, an Italian estimated in 1506 that the total investment needed for conducting trade with the East was 170,000 ducats every year.

The king of Portugal provided only one-fourth of this amount and the rest was raised by the merchants and financiers who collaborated with the Portuguese king. In 1500, he issued an order permitting natives as well as foreign merchants to send their own vessels to the East. Revenues collected in the form of booty, tributes and taxes levied on ships of the private merchants also provided funds for the conduct of trade with India.

### **European merchant-financiers**

Italians, especially the Florentines, occupied an important position among the financiers in the 16th century. Most of the Italian financiers concluded contracts with the Portuguese king. They supplied cash or materials to the king at Lisbon. The king used them to purchase pepper and other commodities from India. These commodities were given to these financiers at Lisbon in view of the contracts signed. However, some of the financiers also sent their own factors to India. Cash or commodities were always sent under the supervision of the Portuguese authorities to the East.

Indian commodities also attracted the German financiers and merchants. The Portuguese king welcomed them with open arms for he was finding it difficult to finance the Oriental enterprise on his own. Since copper was given in part-payment for Indian commodities, especially pepper and other spices,

large quantity of copper was needed for transactions. Some of the German merchant financiers like the Fuggers had a monopoly over the production of copper in Europe. This turned out to be of great use for trade with India. The German financiers could fit out their vessels, entrust cash and commodities to the India House in Lisbon to be taken to India under the Portuguese flag and buy the commodities from Lisbon according to the terms and conditions of the contracts signed.

During the second half of the 16th century both the Welsers and the Fuggers joined the expedition along with Giraldo Paris and Juan Battista Rovalesco for the purchase of 30,000 quintals of pepper directly from India and agreed to send an amount of 1,70,000 crusados to India annually. Thus, the firms of the Welsers and the Fugger's continued to be closely associated with the trade of India. There were a few Portuguese merchants who in their private capacity participated in the trade with India during the 16th century. State officials posted in India were also allowed to participate in the Indian trade. According to their position in the hierarchy, they had some rights to take certain quantity of commodities to Portugal, in lieu of remuneration in cash. The details of their entitlements were spelt out in their appointment orders and this formed part of their emoluments.

### **Indian merchants and rulers**

Several Indian merchants supplied commodities to the Portuguese on credit when the latter did not have cash or commodities to furnish in exchange. The merchants of Cochin, especially the Marakkars, were of great help to the Portuguese in this respect and their services were gratefully remembered by the Portuguese officials.

Sometimes, the Portuguese king was persuaded to grant some privileges to such merchants. Khwaja Shamsuddin Gilani, who had settled down in Cannanore after service at the kingdom of Bijapur, was often helpful to the Portuguese in finding funds on loan.

Some of the local rulers stood surety for the Portuguese when they did not have sufficient money to pay the merchants for the commodities bought by them. For example, the king of Cochin came forward to help the Portuguese several times making the required volume of commodities available to them on credit.

The Portuguese had banned all other vessels from plying on the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. They used to confiscate the ships which carried commodities without a pass (cartaz) from the Portuguese officials. All the ships were required to procure pass from the Portuguese officials in case something had to be shipped to India or other Asian countries. Even rulers of India like Akbar and his successors, Nilam Shah of Ahmednagar, Adil Shah of Bijapur, kings of Cochin, the Zamorins of Calicut and the rulers of Cannanore used to procure cartaz when they had to send ships to some

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places. The fees charged for the issuance of passes also became a source of income for them. Though only a small amount was charged as fees but ships who wished to take passes had to visit ports where the custom houses of the Portuguese asked them to pay tax. Also, the rulers who were defeated by the Portuguese were forced to pay them some money or something in kind. The Portuguese used this method a lot of times to procure money for investment. Thus, the Portuguese used a number of ways to earn money for running their trade in India.

### **Nature of the Portuguese trade with India**

Right from the time Portuguese arrived at Calicut they had demanded that other merchants, Indian as well as foreign, should be ousted and a complete monopoly over trade be granted to them. Portuguese ships equipped with arms and ammunitions threatened other merchants and confiscated their merchandise and vessels. By 1501, the Portuguese king assumed a grandiloquent title showing his proprietary right over the Indian Ocean regions. The title proclaimed him Lord of Navigation, Conquest and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India.

In 1502, the Portuguese demanded an exclusive right over trade at Calicut to which the Zamorin, the king of Calicut, did not yield. Vasco da Gama declared war on ships plying on the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean. He introduced an expedient under which those ships which carried a cartaz duly signed by the Portuguese authorities, namely the royal factor, were not to be attacked. This certificate was first issued in 1502.

Everyone who was involved in maritime activities had to procure cartaz from the Portuguese. There was a condition that they cannot load certain items on their ship such as pepper, ginger, ship pitch, horses, sulphur, lead, coir and cinnamon. The Portuguese had monopoly over these items.

### **Monopoly trade**

Till the end of the 15th century, merchants from various quarters of the world were found on the coastal regions of India engaged in trade and commerce. Vasco Da Gama reported in 1498 that there were merchants from Mecca, Ceylon, Turkey, Egypt, Persia, Ethiopia and various parts of India at the port of Calicut. It is well-known that Chinese merchants as well as merchants from the Red Sea areas used to come to the Indian ports. There is no record of any group of merchants demanding exclusive right of trade in general, nor of any attempts made to declare a few or all commodities set apart for anybody. But, with the arrival of the Portuguese, this state of affairs underwent considerable change. Kings were pressurized to forbid other merchants from trading with their ports. Similarly, certain commodities were declared forbidden to be traded by others.

In other words, the Portuguese demanded monopoly of trade. The treaties concluded with the Indian rulers specifically mentioned this. The setting up of Portuguese fortresses at strategic places, surveillance by their patrolling vessels, and the insistence on passes for other ships were the attempts made to establish monopoly of trade in Asian waters.

### **Trade of the Indian rulers and merchants**

The Portuguese attempts at establishing total monopoly did not bring about a situation in which trade conducted by the Indian rulers and merchants was totally uprooted. The king of Cannanore, for instance, used to collect passes from the Portuguese to send his vessels laden with commodities to Cambay and Hormuz. He imported horses from the above mentioned places though this was identified by the Portuguese a monopoly item. Sometimes such vessels were at the risk of being confiscated by the Portuguese. The same was the case with the kings of Tanur and Calicut on the Malabar Coast. The nobles of Gujarat continued their trade despite the Portuguese monopoly. Malik Gopi, Malik Ayaz, Khwaja Sofar and others interested in trade plied their ships with or without passes from the Portuguese. Besides, the local and foreign merchants settled in India carried on their trade with or without cartaz. The area between Calicut and Cape produced approximately 60,000 quintals of pepper but only 15,000 quintals were sent to the Portuguese factories. The rest of the pepper was taken to other ports and this was termed illegal by the Portuguese. The Portuguese were not willing to increase the price of pepper agreed upon in 1503 even after several decades. Hence, the producers of pepper did not have any alternative other than supplying it to the merchants who might buy it and send it to other centres of trade without the knowledge of the Portuguese. Moreover, several Portuguese officials conducted their own private trade in various commodities without the knowledge of their government. In fact, Portuguese monopoly was never effective in the Red Sea zone.

### **Trade and production**

Overseas trade conducted in the 16th century in Asia in general and India in particular was, by and large, long-distance in nature involving the Asiatic ports on one side and the Atlantic ports on the other. The commodities exported from India reached various parts of Europe. There were a number of elements in the pattern of this trade, as explained earlier, which distinguished it from just 'peddling' trade.

In view of the greater demand for pepper, the cultivators strove to increase the production. In the period between 1515 and 1607, the production of pepper in the Malabar area went up by 200 to 275 per cent. Since we are not aware of the amount of production of pepper before the coming of the Portuguese, it is difficult to determine the increase in production as well. At

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any rate, it is reasonable to conclude that the production of pepper in India increased after the Portuguese advent. But it must be borne in mind that the internal demand for pepper from the Mughal Empire and the external one from the Safavi Empire also might have contributed to the increase in pepper production in India.

### 2.3.3 Causes of Decline of the Portuguese

The Portuguese power witnessed a decline as quickly as it had risen; the reasons of their decline were as follows:

- Nobody could carry on the work of Albuquerque.
- The Portuguese rulers were not tolerant towards religions of the country.
- The administrative system of the Portuguese had gradually become corrupt.
- The rise of other European trading powers—the Dutch, French and the British.
- In 1631, they lost Hugli when Qasim Khan, a Mughal noble, drove them out.
- In 1661, the king of Portugal gave Bombay to Charles II of England as dowry when he married the former's sister.
- The Marathas captured Salsette and Bassein in 1739.
- In the end, the Portuguese were left only with Goa, Diu and Daman.

The short-sighted policy of the Portuguese governors, resorting to every kind of corrupt practice in the name of business including selling people as slaves and carrying on piracy led to their gradual decline in India as well in as the East.

#### Check Your Progress

4. When was the first factory at Cochin established?
5. Who was considered the real founder of the Portuguese power in the East?
6. Why did Albuquerque encourage the Portuguese to marry Indian women?
7. Why did the Arabs withdraw from trading in India?
8. Identify the places where the Portuguese established settlements.
9. When did the Portuguese establish commercial contacts with Bengal?
10. What were the main trade items exported from India to Portugal?



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## 2.4 THE DUTCH

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After the Portuguese, the Dutch also felt encouraged to trade in India. They wanted to have direct access to the spice market of India. To fulfil their ambition, they undertook many voyages to India from 1596 to 1602. In 1602, they established an organization named the United East India Company. The Dutch had conflicts with the Portuguese and the English merchants.

In 1602, the Dutch Parliament passed a Charter. This Charter led to the formation of the Dutch East India Company. As per this Charter, the company had the authority to make wars in order to acquire territories. It also had the power to make treaties and build fortresses.

### **Establishment of factories**

Many factories were set up by the Dutch. Some of the factories were set up at Masulipatam (1605), Pulicat (1610), Surat (1616), Bimilipatam (1641), Karikal (1645), Chinsura (1653) and Cochin (1663). In 1668, the company set up factories in Kasimbazar, Patna, Balasore and Negapatam as well. After the establishment of these factories, they became the most dominant power in the European trade with the East. Till 1690, Pulicat was the main centre of their trading activities. After 1690, Negapatam became the main centre of the Dutch merchants.

The Dutch lost the Battle of Bedera to the English in 1759 and conceded to the English after this battle.

Although there were occasional amicable settlements between the English and the Dutch, hostilities were renewed when in 1623 the Dutch massacred ten Englishmen and nine Japanese at Amboyna, which marked the climax of the hatred of the Dutch towards the English as well as the other trading nations.

The Dutch in their bid for expansion of trade, came into conflicts with Mir Jumla and during 1672–74, they repeatedly obstructed the communication between Surat and other English settlements in Bombay and even captured three English vessels on the Bay of Bengal.

Between 1580 and 1640, Portugal was under Spain. There were hostilities going on between England and Spain, which naturally meant hostilities between the English and the Portuguese. With the Treaty of Madrid in 1630, commercial hostilities between the English and the Portuguese diminished although they did not cease altogether. When in 1640 Portugal became independent of Spain, the relations between the English and Portuguese further improved and the English right to trade in the East was conceded by the Portuguese. This facilitated the conclusion of treaty with the English in 1661 by which the English agreed to support the Portuguese against the Dutch.

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Finally, the rivalry of the trading companies ousted the Dutch and the Portuguese from the Indian trading market.

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### 2.5 FRENCH AND THE BRITISH

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After the Dutch and the Portuguese, the English and the French companies were the only competitors for trade in India.

#### 2.5.1 The French

Compagnie des Indes was the first French company to establish trading relations with India. Louis XIV, the then king of France, granted charter to this company in 1664. After this, the planning of this French company was done by Colbert, the then finance minister of France.

Under this company, the first factory was established in 1668 at Surat. The founder of the first factory was Coron, a Dutchman in the French Service. The next factory was set up in 1669 at Masulipattinam. In 1674, Pondicherry became their capital. From 1690 to 1692, the French set up one more factory at Chandra Nagar, Bengal, on the bank of river Hugli. Mahe(now Malabar) and Karikal (now Coromandel) were acquired by the French in 1725 and 1739 respectively.

The company was given a loan of 3,000,000 livres by the king. For this loan, the king did not charge any interest. The company had the monopoly for 25 years to conduct trading activities from the Cape of Good Hope to India and the South Seas. Aurangzeb gave a *firman* in the favour of the company according to which the company had the permission to conduct trading activities in the Gujarat coast as well.

#### 2.5.2 The British

The East India Company, initially named The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading in the East Indies was granted a royal charter by Queen Elizabeth in 1600. The company was given rights for carrying out trading activities in the East. Later, the company became popular as the English East India Company.

For many years, the company traded only with Java, Sumatra and the Moluccas. At this time, they dealt only in the trading of spices. In 1608, Captain William Hawkins met Jehangir. He showed him the letter which he brought from James I, king of England. In this letter, James I requested Jehangir to allow the English merchants to establish their shops in the country. The merchants of the Portuguese and Surat strongly opposed the establishment of the English merchants in India. Thus, Jehangir had to decline the request of James I.

In 1609, however, Jehangir gave permission to the English to set up their factory at Surat. The company also received permission from the Sultan of Golkunda to trade in Golkunda. However, for this the sultan made a condition that the company will have to pay fixed custom duty of 500 pagodas per year. In 1651, Nawab Shuja-ud-Din permitted the company to continue their trading activities for which the company would be obliged to pay ₹3,000 annually.

In 1656, the English was given the security of trade as well. According to this directive, the English received permission to carry on their import and export activities on land as well water without the need to pay customs or tolls.

In 1691, Ibrahim Khan, the successor of Shaista Khan, issued a *firman* in favour of the English. According to this *firman*, the English were given permission to carry out duty-free trade but they were asked to pay ₹3,000 annually. After 1691, the company prospered by leaps and bounds in Bengal. In 1696, the company gave an excuse that it is at risk from Sobha Singh, a zamindar of Burdwan as he might rebel against the company. With the help of this excuse, the company got the rights for the fortification of their factory.

The zamindari of three villages—Sutanuti, Govindapur and Kalighata or Kalikata—was given to the English in 1698. In return, they were to pay ₹1,200 to Sabarna Chaudhari who was the zamindar of these three villages before the zamindari was granted to the English. In 1700, a separate President and Council took charge of the factories of Bengal. Also, the English constructed a fort. This fort was named after King William II of England. Later, this fort became the seat of the Council which took charge of the factories. The first President and Governor of this Council was Sir Charles Eyre.

In 1714, the English sent John Surman to the Delhi court to arrange all trading facilities for the East India Company. When he met Emperor Farukhsiyar, the emperor issued a *firman* by which the company was granted permission to carry on custom free trade in Bengal, Madras and Bombay. In addition to this, the company was also allowed to mint its own coins.

### 2.5.3 The French vs the English

In 1749, the French company seemed to be a serious rival of the English Company, but it could not survive for a long time due to the following reasons:

- The French Company was controlled by the Government but the Government was not too interested in the company's affairs. On the other hand, the English company was a private concern.
- The English company had more money as compared to the French company. The area of the English trade was also vast.
- The English were strong on the waters as well. They had big ships and their merchants made regular voyage for trading activities.

## NOTES

## War between the English and the French

### NOTES

From 1746 to 1763, English East India Company and French East India Company fought with each other in India. These wars are known as Carnatic wars. They fought with each other in order to get monopoly over trade in India. The Indian rulers, the Mughals, the subedar of Deccan did not participate in these wars.

#### Check Your Progress

11. What was the name of the first Dutch organisation in India?
12. When and where was the first French factory established in India?
13. What was the initial name of the English East India Company?
14. Why did Jehangir refuse the East India Company to establish themselves in India?
15. When was the British trading company allowed to trade in India?
16. Name the villages of which the British got the zamindari.

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## 2.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. The sea route from Europe to India was discovered by Vasco Da Gama.
2. Cochin was the early capital of the Portuguese in India.
3. Vasco da Gama reached the Port of Calicut on 17 May 1498.
4. In 1502, he established a factory at Cochin.
5. Alfonso de Albuquerque was the real founder of the Portuguese Empire in the East.
6. Albuquerque encouraged the Portuguese men to marry Indian women so that he could establish the authority of the Portuguese in India.
7. Portuguese occupation of Diu compelled the Arabs to withdraw from the Indian trade. The Arab merchants of Calicut were apprehensive of the Portuguese designs from the very beginning.
8. Portuguese established settlements on the west and the east coast. The areas in the west coast consisted of
  - Calicut (1500)
  - Cochin (1501)
  - Cannanore (1503)
  - Quilon (1503)

- Cheliyam (1531)
- Rahole (1535)
- Kregannore (1536)
- Mangalore (1568)
- Hanawer (1568)
- Diu (1509)
- Goa (1510)
- Surat (1599)
- Daman (1599)

In east coast, the places consisted of:

- Meliyapur
- Chittagong
- Hugli
- Bandel

9. The Portuguese also tried to establish commercial contacts with Bengal from AD 1517.
10. Pepper was the most popular commodity which was traded from Malabar and the Konkan coasts. Ginger, white sandalwood, red sandalwood, sealing wax, indigo, spikenard, tamarind, areca nut, textiles, ivory and turmeric were also traded from the Malabar Konkan coasts to Portugal.
11. In 1602, the Dutch established an organization named the United East India Company.
12. The first French factory established in Indian was in 1668 at Surat.
13. Initially the English East India Company was called the Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading in the East Indies.
14. The Portuguese merchants and those from Surat had strongly opposed the establishment of the English merchant in India. This forced Jehangir had to decline the request of England's King James I.
15. The English was given the security of trade in 1656.
16. The British was given the zamindari of three villages —Sutanuti, Govindapur and Kalighata—in 1698.

## NOTES

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## 2.7 SUMMARY

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- Vasco Da Gama discovered the sea route from Europe to India. He reached the Port of Calicut on the 17 May 1498.

## NOTES

- The discovery of the sea route to India by Vasco Da Gama ushered the era of Portuguese trade in India.
- The local Indian rulers allowed the Portuguese to set up factories for the development of trade and commerce, and also initiated propagation of the Christian faith, inter-marriages, conversions and settlements of the Europeans.
- Portuguese governor Francisco de Almeidato built forts at Anjadiva, Cannanore and Cochin.
- Nino da Cunha (1529–1538) transferred his capital from Cochin to Goa (1530) and acquired Diu and Bassein (1534) from Bahadur Shah of Gujarat.
- The Italian merchants had established warehouses (factories) in Cairo and Alexandria to carry on trade and commerce.
- To consolidate and strengthen their power the Portuguese also attempted to fortify their factories. A chain of factories and fortresses came into existence for the support of the maritime trade conducted by the Portuguese.
- Pepper was the most popular commodity which was traded from Malabar and the Konkan coasts. Ginger, white sandalwood, red sandalwood, sealing wax, indigo, spikenard, tamarind, areca nut, textiles, ivory and turmeric were also traded from the Malabar Konkan coasts to Portugal.
- The Portuguese brought brocades, damasks, satins, taffetas, cloves, nutmegs, mace, camphor, cinnamon, pepper, chests, writing desks, valuable pearls and jewels to Bengal.
- Taking into account the details of the Portuguese enterprise on the Malabar coast in the period between 1500 and 1506, an Italian estimated in 1506 that the total investment needed for conducting trade with the East was 170,000 ducats every year.
- Italians, especially the Florentines, occupied an important position among the financiers in the 16th century.
- During the second half of the 16th century both the Welsers and the Fuggers joined the expedition along with Giraldo Paris and Juan Battista Rovalesco for the purchase of 30,000 quintals of pepper directly from India and agreed to send an amount of 1,70,000 crusados to India annually.
- Several Indian merchants supplied commodities to the Portuguese on credit when the latter did not have cash or commodities to furnish in exchange.

- Right from the time Portuguese arrived at Calicut they had demanded that other merchants, Indian as well as foreign, should be ousted and a complete monopoly over trade be granted to them.
- Overseas trade conducted in the 16th century in Asia in general and India in particular was, by and large, of long-distance in nature involving the Asiatic ports on one side and the Atlantic ports on the other.
- After the Portuguese, the Dutch also felt encouraged to trade in India. They wanted to have direct access to the spice market of India.
- The Dutch in their bid for expansion of trade, came into conflicts with Mir Jumla and during 1672–74, they repeatedly obstructed the communication between Surat and other English settlements in Bombay and even captured three English vessels on the Bay of Bengal.
- Compagnie des Indes was the first French company to establish trading relations with India.
- The English East India Company initially traded only with Java, Sumatra and the Moluccas
- In 1609, Jehangir gave permission to the English to set up their factory at Surat. The company also received permission from the Sultan of Golkunda to trade in Golkunda.
- In 1691, Ibrahim Khan, the successor of Shaista Khan, issued a firman in favour of the English. According to this firman, the English were given permission to carry out duty-free trade but they were asked to pay ₹3,000 annually.
- From 1746 to 1763, English East India Company and French East India Company fought with each other in India. These wars are known as Carnatic wars.

## NOTES

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## 2.8 KEY WORDS

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- **Crusado:** It is a gold coin of Portugal.
- **Zamorin:** It refers to the title used by the Nair rulers of the erstwhile state of Kerala.
- **Mariner:** It means a man who serves as a sailor.
- **Autonomous:** It refers to acting independently or having the freedom to do so.
- **Manoeuvre:** It means to act in order to achieve a certain goal.
- **Bullion:** It means gold or silver in bulk before coining.
- **Brocade:** It is a rich fabric, usually silk, woven with a raised pattern, typically with gold or silver thread.



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- **Emolument:** It means a salary, fee or profit from employment or office.
- **Grandiloquent:** It refers to something that is pompous or extravagant in language, style or manner.
- **Evince:** It means to reveal the presence of a quality or feeling.

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## 2.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short Answer Questions

1. Write a note on the discovery of India by the Europeans.
2. Discuss the role of the Zamorins in the early 16th century.
3. Why did the Portuguese ban ships from plying on the Indian Ocean?
4. Briefly discuss Portuguese monopoly trade in India.
5. Discuss the causes of the Portuguese decline in India.
6. Give a brief sketch of the French expansion in India.
7. Discuss the causes of the Anglo-French rivalry.

### Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss the expansion of the Portuguese in India.
2. What was the role of trade for the Portuguese expansion in India?
3. How did the Dutch plan their expansion in India? Explain.
4. How did the British acquire the right to trade in India?

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## 2.10 FURTHER READINGS

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## **UNIT 3 RIVALRY BETWEEN EUROPEAN POWERS IN INDIA**

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### **NOTES**

#### **Structure**

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Anglo-French Rivalry in the Carnatic
- 3.3 The Rise of British Power
  - 3.3.1 Dual Government
  - 3.3.2 Battle of Buxar
- 3.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 Key Words
- 3.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 3.8 Further Readings

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### **3.0 INTRODUCTION**

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The 18th century in India was an important period of transition and remains the subject of continuing debate among scholars of late medieval and modern Indian history. The two main debates on the 18th century are the nature of transition from a centralized Mughal polity to the emergence of regional confederations, and the nature of the transformation brought about by the increasing role of the English East India Company in the economic, commercial, and financial life of the subcontinent. We see the rise of a new economic order, and decentralization of political power which went hand-in-hand with a broader localization process.

As you learnt, the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 laid bare a patchwork of several sovereignties, a network of fragmented and layered forms of regional political powers that had been partly masked and managed by the practices of Mughal state and sovereignty. The 18th century was marked by the emergence of regional polities, the so-called successor states like Awadh, Bengal and Hyderabad, although they were politically and financially independent from Mughal state, but always used the Mughal symbols and titles for legitimacy and political stability. It is generally viewed that the East India Company's expansion in India took place due to a power vacuum left after Aurangzeb's death. In the debates of continuity and change, historians have presented enduring socio-economic structures such as financial institutions and information networks that emphasize the utility of Indian

agents or collaborators in facilitating early company rule. In this unit, you will get acquainted with the advent of British rule in India, as well as the rivalry between the British and the French.

## NOTES

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### 3.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss various aspects of the Anglo-French rivalry
- Critically analyse the Battle of Plassey
- Describe the system of dual government
- Examine the events that led to the Battle of Buxar

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### 3.2 ANGLO-FRENCH RIVALRY IN THE CARNATIC

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Compagnie des Indes was the first French company to establish trading relations with India. Louis XIV, the then king of France, granted authority for this company in 1664. After this, the planning of this French company was done by Colbert, the then finance minister of France.

Under this company, the first factory was established in 1668 at Surat. The founder of the first factory was Coron, a Dutchman in the French Service. The next factory was set up in 1669 at Masulipattinam. In 1674, Pondicherry became their capital. From 1690 to 1692, the French set up one more factory at Chandra Nagar, Bengal on the bank of river Hugli. Mahe (now Malabar) and Karikal (now Coromandel) were acquired by the French in 1725 and 1739 respectively.

The company was given a loan of 3,000,000 livres by the king. For this loan, the king did not charge any interest. The Company had the monopoly for 25 years to conduct trading activities from the Cape of Good Hope to India and the South Seas. Aurangzeb gave a *farmaan* in the favour of the company according to which the company had the permission to conduct trading activities in the Gujarat coast as well.

#### The English

The Company named 'The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading in the East Indies' was granted a royal charter by Queen Elizabeth. The company was given rights for carrying out trading activities in the East. Later, the company became popular as the English East India Company.

For many years, the company traded only with Java, Sumatra and the Moluccas. At this time, they dealt only in the trading of spices. In 1608, Captain William Hawkins met Jahangir. He showed him the letter which he

brought from James I, King of England. In this letter, James I had requested Jahangir to allow the English merchant to establish trade in the country. The merchants of Portugal and Surat strongly opposed the establishment of the English merchant in India. Thus, Jahangir had to decline the request of James I.

In 1609, Jahangir gave permission to the English to set up their factory at Surat. The company also received permission from the Sultan of Golkunda to trade in Golkunda. However, for this the sultan made a condition that the company will have to pay fixed custom duty of 500 pagodas per year. In 1651, Nawab Shuja-ud-din permitted the company to continue their trading activities for which the company would be obliged to pay ₹3,000 annually.

In 1656, the English was given the security of trade as well. According to this directive, the English received permission to carry on their import and export activities on land as well water without the need to pay customs or tolls.

In 1691, Ibrahim Khan who was the successor of Shaista Khan issued a *farmaan* in the favour of the English. According to this *farmaan*, the English were given permission to carry out duty free trade, but they were asked to pay ₹3,000 annually. After 1691, the company prospered by leaps and bounds in Bengal. In the year 1696, the company gave an excuse that it is at risk from Sobha Singh, a zamindar of Burdwan as he might rebel against the company. With the help of this excuse, the company got the rights for the fortification of their factory.

The zamindari of three villages: Sutanuti, Govindapur and Kalighata or Kalikata, was given to the English in 1698. In return, they were to pay ₹1,200 to Sabarna Chaudhari who was the zamindar of these three villages before the zamindari was granted to the English. In 1700, a separate President and Council took charge of the factories of Bengal. Also, the English constructed a fort. This fort was named after King William II of England. Later, this fort became the seat of the Council which took charge of the factories. The first President and Governor of this Council was Sir Charles Eyre.

In 1714, the English sent John Surman to the Delhi court to arrange all trading facilities for the East India Company. When he met Emperor Farukhsiyar, the emperor issued a *farmaan* by which the company was granted permission to carry on custom free trade in Bengal, Madras and Bombay. In addition to this, the company was also allowed to mint his own coins.

### **The French vs The English**

In 1749, the French company seemed to a serious rival of the English Company, but it could not survive for a long time due to the following reasons:

- The French Company was controlled by the government, but the government was not too interested in the company's affairs. On the other hand, the English company was a private concern company.

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## NOTES

- The English company had more money as compared to the French company. The area of the English trade was also vast.
- The English were strong on the waters as well. They had big ships and their merchants made regular voyage for trading activities.

### **War between the English and the French**

From 1746 to 1763, the English East India Company and French East India Company fought with each other in India. These wars are known as the Carnatic wars. They fought with each other in order to get monopoly over trade in India. The Indian rulers, the Mughals, the subedar of Deccan did not participate in these wars.

### **The First Carnatic War (1746–1748)**

The First Carnatic War was directly linked to the events in Europe. The English and French were fighting on the issue of Austria's succession (1740–48). Once the war broke in March 1740, the two companies in India started preparing for it. Dupleix, the French Governor-General in India since 1742, was the first to realize the necessity of obtaining political influence and territorial control. But he had to face many difficulties. The French East India Company was the Government's company which was in trouble. Although the trade of the company had increased in recent past, its expenditure was more than its income. Naturally, it fell into heavy indebtedness. If this was not enough, the rivalry between two senior leaders-Dupleix and La Bourdonnais, worsened the situation for French. La Bourdonnais arrived near Pondicherry in July 1746 with 10 vessels, 406 canons, 2,350 white soldiers and 700 black soldiers. He wanted to act with complete independence, while Governor-General Dupleix considered himself superior.

On September 21, 1746 the French troops, led by La Bourbononais, captured Madras, an important English trading centre since mid-17th century. Anwar-ud-din, the Nawab of Carnatic, sent a large Indian army to drive the French out of Madras. He was 'guided' by the English. In the Battle of St. Thonie (November 4, 1746) situated on the bank of Adyar river, Mahfuz Khan, son of Anwaruddin, was defeated by French captain Paradis. He had less than a thousand soldiers and had to fight 10,000 men. But the disciplined and organized army of the French, led by capable officers, won the battle.

The English on the other hand besieged Pondicherry from 6th September to 15th October 1748. But Dupleix made a strong defence and forced the English to retreat. This triumph of Dupleix made him a known and popular figure in the Indian courts. The war came to an end by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748), under which Madras was given back to the English. The French got Quebec (Canada) in exchange of Madras. The English promised not to attack Pondicherry.

The first Carnatic war taught the lesson to the French that a small army of Europeans, aided by Indian troops and trained after the European fashion could easily defeat much larger Indian armies.

To secure political advantages, Dupleix started interfering in the internal matters of Hyderabad and Carnatic. Chin Qilich Khan Nizam-ul-Mulk, the founder of independent Hyderabad kingdom, died in 1748. Dupleix supported Muzaffar Jang, the grandson of Nizam instead of Nasir Jung, the son. The Nawab of Carnatic, Anwaruddin also died in 1749. Dupleix supported Chanda Sahib to the throne of the Carnatic as against Mohammad Ali, the illegitimate son of late Nawab. The English had no other option except to support Nasir Jung for Hyderabad and Mohammad Ali for Carnatic. Thus the war of succession in these two kingdoms led to second Anglo-French War (1749–1754).

### **The Second Carnatic War (1749–1754)**

The war started at the time when the English and French had peace in Europe. This proved that the two were fighting in India for commercial supremacy and not merely because of their traditional rivalry.

On 3 August, 1749, French soldiers with sepoys (from ‘Sipahi’ of Persian) attacked Arcot in Ambur, the capital of Carnatic. Anwaruddin was killed and his elder son, Mahfuz Khan was captured but his younger son Mohammad Ali Khan Wallajah fled. He took shelter at Trichinopoly, proclaimed himself the Nawab of Arcot and received support from the English. Chanda Sahib and the French officer, Jacques Law seized Trichinopoly. At this critical juncture, a young English officer, Robert Clive seized Arcot, the capital of Chanda Sahib on September 11, 1751 with only 200 European soldiers and 300 sepoys. The purpose was to free Trichinopoly from Chanda Sahib’s seize. The plan worked and Chanda Sahib had to withdraw his large army from Trichinopoly to lay siege to Arcot to recapture it. Clive and his small army stood the siege for 50 days. Chanda Sahib had to withdraw; later the English defeated him and his Indian allies at several places; he surrendered and was finally executed, the French gave up their entire claim over Carnatic.

However, the French supremacy over Hyderabad continued. Muzaffar Jung was installed as the Nizam and Subedar of the Deccan. In return, the French got command of a vast area from Krishna to Cape Camorin which was the jagir of Valdavur. Though Muzaffar Jung was killed in 1751, his successor Salabat Jung continued his ‘friendship’ with the French. Bussy, the French officer at Hyderabad, even succeeded in obtaining ‘*farmaan*’ from the Mughal emperor Ahmad Shah, confirming Salabat as the ruler of the Deccan.

The failure of the French in Carnatic was a great setback. The French Government, which was always in trouble, could not bear this defeat. So it

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recalled Dupleix to France in 1754. The Second Carnatic War had ended with English acquiring dominance in Carnatic and French, a place in the Court of Nizam.

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### **The Third Carnatic War (1758–63)**

The Third Carnatic War (1758–63) began with the Seven Years' War (1756–63) of Europe. This war was no longer confined to Carnatic. Robert Clive, the English governor of Fort St. David and Lieutenant Colonel seized Chandan Nagar, the French settlement in Bengal in 1757. He was also responsible for the victory against Siraj-ud-daula, the Nawab of Bengal, in the Battle of Plassey (June 23, 1757). Thus, financially, English East India Company was more secured.

However, the most decisive battles of the war were fought in the Carnatic. The French appointed Count de Lally as the new governor of Pondichery. He besieged Fort St. David and captured on 2 June, 1758; also captured Nagur and entered Tanjore. He then attacked Madras where he called Bussy to assist him. This was a blunder because Hyderabad was well under French control. Bussy himself was reluctant to come. The British forced Salabat Jung to cede 80 miles long and 20 miles wide territory to them. After their victory over Plassey, the English troops led by Col. Forde, captured Northern Sarkar (December 1758) and Masulipattinam (April 1759). But the most decisive battle was fought at Wandiwash (January 22, 1760) where Lally was defeated by English troops, led by Eyer Coote. Lally retreated to Pondicherry, which was besieged by the English and Lally was forced to surrender in 1761.

The Seven Years' War ended in 1763 and a treaty was signed at Paris (February 10, 1763). Among other things, it was decided that Pondicherry would go to France along with five trading ports and various factories but merely as a trading centre without any fortification and armies.

Lally, was accused of treason and executed when he returned to France. He was made a scapegoat. It is wrong to blame only Lally for French failure. Though, some of his moves like calling Bussy from Hyderabad (1758)-were blunders but the real reason for French failure lies in the structure of its company and the policies and attitude of the French Government.

The French East India Company was a state undertaking company whose directors were appointed by the crown. The lethargy and bureaucratic control of this company could be compared to the bureaucratic control of many public sector companies of post Independent India. The English East India Company, on the other hand, was a private undertaking based on free enterprise and individual initiative. It earned profits from the Asian trade and did not depend on the state.



The French could never focus towards India as their priority remained Europe whereas England gave their full attention to the oceans and distant lands, especially India. The French failed to understand the complex political situation of India unlike the British. The French also failed to compete with the English in naval supremacy.

Thus, the third Carnatic war ended the French challenge in India and paved the way for the establishment of the British Empire in India.

### **Causes for the success of the British against the French**

1. The English company was a private enterprise-this created a sense of self-confidence among the people, the French Company was state-owned.
2. Superior geographical position of England in Europe. France had to pay more attention to its border while at war as compared to relative secure position of England.
3. The English navy was superior to the French navy. It helped to cut off the link between the French possessions in India and France.
4. French government never took interest in Indian affairs.
5. The English held three important places i.e. Calcutta, Bombay and Madras whereas the French had only Pondicherry.
6. The French subordinated their commercial interest to territorial ambition, which made the French Company short of funds.

#### **Check Your Progress**

1. Name the first French company to establish trading relations with India.
2. Which state became the Dutch capital in India in 1674?
3. Why did Jahangir decline the request of James I to let Captain William Hawkins establish trade in India?
4. In 1691, Ibrahim Khan, who was the successor of Shaista Khan, issued a farmaan in favour of the English. What was this farmaan all about?

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### **3.3 THE RISE OF BRITISH POWER**

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In 1717, the Mughal emperor issued a *farmaan* by which it granted special benefits to the English East India Company, namely, exemption of taxes on goods imported and exported from Bengal. However, this concession did not ensure that they could trade in Bengal without paying any taxes. The Company

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servants like other Indian traders had to pay taxes. This misinterpretation of the *farmaan* became a constant cause of dispute between the nawabs of Bengal and the Company. All the nawabs of Bengal, beginning from Murshid Quli Khan to Alivardi Khan, refused to sympathize with the Company's misconstrued explanation of the *farmaan* and even forced them to pay a huge amount as indemnity if they used the *dastaks* wrongly.

In 1741, when Muhammad Shah Rangila was the Mughal sovereign, Alivardi Khan, the governor of Bengal, announced himself independent and established his capital at Murshidabad. In 1756, with Alivardi's demise, and in the absence of any rightful successor, several factions vied with each other to make their chosen candidate the Nawab of Bengal. Though Alivardi wanted his grandson, Siraj-ud-Daulah, son of his youngest daughter, to acquire the nawabship, the latter's succession to the throne was not accepted by other contenders, such as Shaukat Jang (*faujdar* of Purnea) and Ghasiti Begam, eldest daughter of Alivardi. In the wake of increasing court intrigues, the English East India Company took the opportunity to win factions in their favour and work against the Nawab, and thereby lead to a headlong confrontation with the Nawab.

As Bengal, in the 18th century, was the most prosperous province, the English East India Company considered it economically and politically, extremely lucrative. Hence, it is natural that they wanted to consolidate their position further in Bengal. They wanted to base their operations in Calcutta. There were other European contenders too in Bengal, namely, the Dutch, having their factory at Chinsura, and the French with their factory at Chandernagor.

Siraj-ud-Daulah became the Nawab of Bengal in 1756. Apart from having several foes in the family who were not happy with the succession, he was immature and lacked adequate skills to tackle the situation. In the South, the English East India Company and the French were vying against each other. Without seeking Nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah's consent, the English began to build fortifications in Calcutta. They even chose to disregard the Nawab's order to curtail augmentation of their military resources and abuse the use of *dastaks* granted to them by the *farmaan* of 1717. Also, Company servants began misusing the concessions granted by the *farmaan* of 1717 by extending the privileges over their private trade too. Causing further economic loss to Bengal, the officials began to profit by selling off the *dastaks* to the Indian merchants. Another cause of discontentment towards the English for Siraj was their conscious move to give protection to Siraj's foe Krishna Das, son of Raja Rajballava.

### **The Battle of Plassey (1757)**

To punish the highhandedness of the Company, Siraj-ud-Daulah retaliated by striking Calcutta on 16 June 1756 and bringing it under his sway by 20

June 1756. The English were caught unawares and the Nawab's huge force was no match to their troops. Most Englishmen escaped to Fulda, only twenty miles down the Hoogly, and the rest were held back as prisoners.

It was Siraj's folly to have allowed the English to flee to Fulda and not annihilate them entirely from Fulda. Again, after capturing Calcutta, he did not attempt to consolidate his position and ensure its defence from any counter attack. Such errors are seldom overlooked in history. In January 1757, the English troops, headed by Robert Clive and Watson, attacked Calcutta and recaptured it. Siraj-ud-Daulah was compelled to consent to the Treaty of Alinagar (as Calcutta was renamed in 9 February 1757), agree to all their claims. Having strengthened their position, the English wanted to embarrass the Nawab further and in March 1757, they sent their troops to strike at the French settlement at Chandernagor.

As Siraj wanted to seek French support in his fight against the English, he requested Clive to refrain from aggression towards the French. This prompted Clive to conspire against the Nawab and ally with those in the court and army who were dissatisfied with Siraj's succession to the throne, namely, Mir Jafar, Mir Bakshi, Jagath Seth and Amin Chand.

Owing to the betrayal of Mir Jafar and Rai Durlab, Siraj, despite being armed with a huge contingent, was defeated by the small army of English soldiers under Robert Clive in the Battle of Plassey (23 June 1757). Siraj-ud-Daulah was held captive and finally was killed by Mir Jafar's son Miran. Clive placed Mir Jafar on the throne of Bengal. In lieu of nawabship, Mir Jafar had to pay a huge sum to the English, and part with the 24 Parganas. The enormity of the wealth looted from Bengal can be gauged by the fact that almost 300 boats were required to carry the spoils to Fort William.

The Battle of Plassey was not a battle in the real sense, as the Nawab's army was headed by Mir Jaffer and Rai Durlabh, who had shifted their allegiance towards the English and made no effort to contest the English troops. As demands for more presents and bribes from the Company's servants increased, the coffer of Mir Jafar soon became barren. When Mir Jafar became unable to meet the Company's expectations any further, the English replaced him by his son-in-law Mir Qasim. The newly appointed nawab won the favour of the English by granting them the zamindari of the districts of Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong and rewarding them with expensive gifts.

### **Consequences of Plassey**

According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, an eminent historian, 23 June 1757, marked the end of the medieval period in India and the beginning of the modern period. Retrospectively speaking, in the years following Plassey (1757–76), that not even covered a single generation, one notices the waning out of the

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medieval practice of theocratic rule, which can be considered as a fallout of the Battle.

The Company's resident at the Nawab's *darbar*, Luke Scrafton, in his observations on post-Plassey Bengal had commented, 'The general idea at this time entertained by the servants of the Company was that the battle of Plassey did only restore us to the same situation we were in before the capture of Calcutta (by Siraj-ud-Daulah); the *Subah* (*subedar*) was conceived to be as independent as ever, and the English returned into their commercial character...' This observation overlooks the fact that most of the restrictions inflicted on the nawab post Plassey had been already been enforced on Mir Jafar in a treaty signed (5 June 1757) before the onset of the battle.

However, Plassey did not make the English the rightful legal rulers of Bengal. The Supreme Court of Calcutta even pointed out that apart from those living in Calcutta, other English officials were not British subjects. Thus, post Plassey, the English did not shed their 'commercial character'. This was all the more evident when the English won the Battle of Buxar (1764). However, the commercial activities of the English were gradually becoming political as Clive, determined to yield more benefits, pressurized the meek puppet nawab, Mir Jafar, to concede more privileges. During this period, the Marathas also suffered a crushing defeat at Panipat and the French underwent heavy losses owing to a shipwreck in South India, thereby leaving no serious contenders to challenge the English in Bengal.

After Plassey, it was quite unexpected that the Marathas would be routed, or the French would be subdued, thereby allowing the English to gain control over Bengal. It was the event of the next ten years that turned paramount influence into a new regime.

The English obtained a few immediate military and commercial benefits after Plassey. They worked their way to consolidate their position politically in the 'three provinces abounding in the most valuable production of nature and art'. Their confidence got further boosted when the French were ousted from Bengal. They took this opportunity to consolidate their position in the south. In fact, foreseeing perhaps the potentials of the English, Clive had advised Pitt the Elder, a prominent member of the King's government in London, to request the Crown to take over direct control over Bengal and lay the foundation of the British Empire.

### 3.3.1 Dual Government

In Bengal's history, the treaty of Allahabad (1765) is extremely significant as it ushered in a new administrative mechanism, which laid down the foundation of the British administrative system in India. Hence, the Nawab's administrative powers were clipped, bringing in a new mechanism of power devoid of responsibility and vice versa.

We need to understand the meaning of the *diwani* and *nizamat* functions to understand the dual system of government better. The provincial administration in the Mughal period was divided into two levels: the *nizamat* (military defense, police and administration of justice) functions which were looked after by *subedar* or governor and his officials, and the *diwani* affairs (management of revenues and finances) which were handled by another similar such set of officials under another *subedar*. These officers were answerable to the central government and they kept a check on each other. Murshid Quli was in charge of Bengal, when Aurangzeb died.

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By signing the treaty of Allahabad (with Shah Alam II), the English obtained *diwani* and *nizamat* rights in lieu of ₹26 lakh as annual pension and ₹53 lakh, respectively. However, the Company had received the *diwani* rights from the Mughal emperor and the *nizamat* powers from the nawab. In a treaty signed earlier in February 1765 with Nawab Najm-ud-Daulah, the Company had already secured all *nizamat* powers, including military, defence and foreign affairs. Though the Company kept all administrative matters under his control, the *diwani* and the *nizamat* operations were handled by its Indian representatives. As this administrative mechanism involved both the Nawab and the Company, it is referred as the Dual or double Government of Bengal.

The Dual Government had badly affected the administration. While there was no discipline and order, trade and commerce suffered, and merchants almost became paupers, thriving industries, such as of silk and textiles, collapsed, agriculture was evaluated by the Company to be unyielding and thereby, peasants were subjected to dire poverty. The outbreak of the great famine of 1770 reflected the flaws of the Company's indirect governing policy. Around 10 million people lost their lives in the famine, which meant almost a third of the population of Bengal and Bihar. However, during this period of utter distress when the people in desperation were even feeding on the dead to survive, Company's servants and *gomastas* continued with their illegal private trade. While exercising monopoly over the obtainable grain, they even seized the seeds to be used for successive harvests from the peasants.

The Company, under Cartier's governorship (1769–1772), chose to overlook the high mortality and the reduction of cultivable land, granted absolutely no remittance on land revenue, instead increased it by 10 per cent for the following year.

The high mortality rate affected the obtainable quantum of production from agriculture and seriously upset the economic well-being of the province. As the revenue-paying capacity dwindled, the zamindars failed to collect adequate revenue. This in turn had an impact on the Company's income and as it lost its cultivators and artisans.

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### East India Company as Sovereign Ruler of Bengal

Clive's Dual Government proved to be a complete failure. In 1772, Warren Hastings became the governor of Bengal, and embarked upon an offensive plan that would remove 'the mask of Mughal sovereignty' from the soil of Bengal, and make the English the rightful rulers. The Company servants were made responsible for dual administration. The Nawab practically had no share in administration. The pension granted to Shah Alam II was discontinued and he was compelled to part with Allahabad and Kora, which were sold out to shuja-ud-Daulah.

In this way, within a span of two decades, the reins of Bengal's administration passed over to the Company. Unfortunately, under Company rule, the most prosperous and industrially developed province soon became steeped in abject poverty and suffering that became augmented in the wake of famines and epidemics. Gaining control over Bengal, the English had become successful in founding a colonial empire and fulfil its imperial designs.

#### 3.3.2 Battle of Buxar

The Battle of Buxar (1764) was fought between the forces under the command of the British East India Company led by Hector Munro, and the combined armies of Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal; Shuja-ud-Daula the Nawab of Awadh; and the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II.

When Robert Clive and his Company officials had emptied the Nawab's treasures completely, they thought Mir Jafar to be incapable of yielding any further benefits. Few English officials like Holwel were lobbying against Mir Jafar. Mir Qasim, son-in-law of Mir Jafar replaced him as nawab on 27 September 1760. As rewards of his nawabship, Mir Qasim had to concede Burdwan, Midnapore and Chittagaon to the East India Company. He shifted the capital to Mungher. Though during the initial years, he accepted British domination, however, the increasing misuse of the *dastaks* by the Company servants and the consequent losses to the treasury exasperated him to abolish the *dastak* system and exempt duties on trade for all. This precipitated the deposition of Mir Qasim, with Mir Jafar being reinstated to nawabship. Mir Qasim planned an offensive at Buxar (22 October 1764) against the English by allying with Shah Alam II, the Mughal king and Shuja-ud-Daulah, the Nawab of Awadh. However, the joint forces of the Indian sovereigns could not win against the well-trained and regulated English troops, armed with advanced ammunitions. The failure at Buxar made it evident that India lacked in industrial and technological development.

After reinstating Mir Jafar to the throne of Bengal, the English negotiated a treaty with Shah Alam at Allahabad in 1765 by which the latter conceded *diwani* rights to the Company in lieu of a pension of ₹26 lakhs from the Company and ₹53 lakhs from the Nawab of Bengal. Shuja-ud-Daulah,



who was a party to the same treaty had to agree to give Allahabad and Kara to the Mughals as well as part with the zamindari of Banaras to Balwant Rai, who was an English loyalist.

In Bengal, between 1765 and 1772, an innovative governing machinery, the dual system of administration, was introduced. With the Company's consent, the Nawab appointed Raja Shitab Rai and Reza Khan as deputy *diwans*, who in actual terms were delegated to work for the English rather than the Nawab. By acquiring the *diwani* rights (authority of revenue collection), the Company virtually became the de facto power, while the Nawab remained the titular head responsible for civil and criminal administration. The inhabitants of the region suffered the most through this arrangement. To understand the motive behind such a decision, it may be reasoned out that this system of administration reflected the Company's inexperience in matters related to administration, as the Company was essentially a trading body.

Since 1765, the Company became the actual sovereign of Bengal, gaining exclusive rights over all military and political affairs. The Nawab was made responsible for the defense of the British, within and outside Bengal. The East India Company exercised direct control over *diwani* functions, which gave them the right to collect the revenues of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The Company had indirect hold over the *nizamat* functions, namely, judicial and police rights, also possessing the right to nominate the deputy subedar.

### **Political Implications of the Battle of Buxar**

The Battle of Buxar established British control over Bengal. Buxar revealed the political and military shortfalls of the Indian rulers and the decadence of the Mughal Empire. With increasing intrigues and factionalism at the Nawab's court, and with vested interests coming into play, corruption increased and Company officials like Clive used the opportunity to become wealthy. The Treaty of Allahabad signed by Shuja-ud-Daulah and Shah Alam II with the English granted the latter the right to trade freely in Awadh. Moreover, the English possessed the right to station an army at Awadh, which were to be maintained by Shuja-ud-Daulah. In lieu of transferring the *diwani* rights over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the English, Shah Alam II received Kora and Allahabad and an annual pension of ₹26 lakhs.

### **Consequences of the Battle of Buxar**

Though the Battle of Buxar was precipitated by the alliance drawn by Mir Qasim with Shuja-ud-Daulah and thereby had caused political repercussions in Bengal, Mir Qasim's decision to break up the alliance even before Munro's attack, saved him. It appears that Shuja-ud-Daulah was the most affected by the defeat at Buxar, making him a nominal power. The influential position that he held in North India got curbed overnight. To get back his lost prestige, he tried to annex Varanasi, Chunar and Allahabad, but could not progress

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further when his troops abandoned him. Trying to launch another offensive against the English, he went from place to place to ally with other powers. He even sought shelter from the Ruhelas and Bangash Afghans, who had been traditional enemies of his family. However, with all his attempts becoming futile, he surrendered to the English in May 1765 and sought shelter. Prior to Shuja's surrender, Shah Alam had accepted the English supremacy and remained under their protection.

Militarily Buxar was very significant for the English. The English victory at Plassey was not entirely commendable as Siraj suffered defeat when his generals betrayed him. However, there was no instance of betrayal at Buxar. The English troops emerged victorious defeating an experienced politically influential personality like Shuja. After having established their position in Bengal, Buxar laid out the path for British supremacy over north India.

### **Treaty of Allahabad**

In May 1765, Clive was entrusted the governorship of Bengal for the second time. The Company officials were looking for the appropriate means to tackle Shuja and Shah Alam. There were no further annexation plans with regard to Shuja's territories, which was already under the sway of the English forces. The newly acquired responsibility of governing both Awadh and Allahabad prompted the English to look for innovative designs.

According to the Treaty of Allahabad, the concluding agreement drawn with Shuja-ud-Daulah, (16 August 1765), the territories earlier belonging to Shuja, except Allahabad and Kora, were given back. Shah Alam was given Allahabad and Kora. Also, Shuja was assured regular revenue payment from his zamindari of Varanasi, which was presented by the English to Balwant Singh for having helped them during Buxar. In this way, the Company established 'Perpetual and universal peace, sincere friendship and firm union' with the Nawab. It was also agreed that if a third party attacked any one of the powers, the other party to the Treaty would assist him in ousting the intruder by sharing his troops totally or partially. The Nawab had to bear the expenses of the Company's army if it assisted the Nawab. However, it is not clear if the Company met the expenses of the Nawab's army when the Company used its services. Also, the Nawab had to pay ₹50 lakh as compensation for the war, and grant permission to the Company to continue duty-free trade in his territories.

### **The Puppet Nawabs of Bengal**

Post-Buxar, Mir Jafar was reinstated to the throne of Bengal by the English. By agreeing to reduce his troops, Mir Jafar had curbed the military powers of the nawab further. He was unable to bring in any formidable political or administrative changes in Bengal at this stage because he had a very weak

personality and had developed a negative approach considering the unpleasant political situation he had to tackle and his ailment (believed to be suffering from leprosy). The English success at Buxar, followed by Mir Jafar's demise sealed the fate of the nawabs in Bengal and laid the foundation of the British empire in Bengal.

The Company made Najm-ud-Daulah, Mir Jafar's minor son, the nawab and signed a treaty with him that made the throne completely subservient to the English. Muhammad Reza Khan was appointed deputy governor by the nawab under English directives. Khan looked after the entire administration, and he could only be replaced with the approval of the governor and Council. The governor and Council's approval were also essential while appointing or removing revenue collectors.

Subsequently, the Nawab's status deteriorated further. After resuming for his second term of governorship in May 1765, Clive pressurized Najm-ud-Daulah to grant all the revenues to the Company in exchange of an annual pension of ₹50 lakh. When Najm-ud-Daulah died in 1766, he was succeeded by his minor brother Saif-ud-Daulah, who was granted a pension of ₹12 lakh only. Before his death (1770), he had signed a treaty with the English in 1766 by which he had granted all matters related to the administration and protection of the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the English.

The pension amount was further reduced to ₹10 lakh when Najm-ud-Daulah was succeeded by his minor brother Mubarak-ud-Daulad. That the powers of the nawabs had been completely curbed is evident from the following comment made by a judge of the Supreme Court at Calcutta in 1775 regarding the status of the nawab and calling him as 'a phantom, a man of straw'.

#### Check Your Progress

5. What was the outcome of the dual government?
6. Identify the warring sides in the Battle of Buxar.
7. Outline the political implications of the Battle of Buxar.
8. What were the consequences of the Battle of Buxar?

### 3.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. Compagnie des Indes was the first French company to establish trading relations with India.
2. In 1674, Pondicherry became the Dutch capital.

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3. Jahangir declined the request of James I to let Captain William Hawkins establish trade in India because the merchants of Portugal and Surat strongly opposed the establishment of the English merchant in India.
4. In 1691, Ibrahim Khan, who was the successor of Shaista Khan, issued a *farmaan* in the favour of the English. According to this *farmaan*, the English were given permission to carry out duty free trade but they were asked to pay ₹3,000 annually.
5. The outcome of the Dual government was that it had badly affected the administration. There was hardly any discipline and order and commerce suffered heavy losses.
6. The Battle of Buxar (1764) was fought between the forces under the command of the British East India Company led by Hector Munro, and the combined armies of Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal; Shuja-ud-Daula the Nawab of Awadh; and the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II.
7. The Battle of Buxar established British control over Bengal. Buxar revealed the political and military shortfalls of the Indian rulers and the decadence of the Mughal Empire.
8. The consequences of the Battle of Buxar are as follows:
  - English supremacy was accepted by Shah Alam.
  - Militarily Buxar was very significant for the English.

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### 3.5 SUMMARY

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- Compagnie des Indes was the first French company to establish trading relations with India.
- Louis XIV, the then king of France, granted authority for this company in 1664.
- The Company named 'The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading in the East Indies' was granted a royal charter by Queen Elizabeth.
- From 1746 to 1763, English East India Company and French East India Company fought with each other in India. These wars are known as Carnatic wars.
- The First Carnatic War was directly linked to the events in Europe. The English and French were fighting on the issue of Austria's succession (1740–48).
- In 1717, the Mughal emperor issued a *farman* by which it granted special benefits to the English East India Company, namely, exemption of taxes on goods imported and exported from Bengal.

- To punish the highhandedness of the Company, Siraj-ud-Daulah retaliated by striking Calcutta on 16 June 1756 and bringing it under his sway by 20 June 1756.
- According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, an eminent historian, 23 June 1757, marked the end of the medieval period in India and the beginning of the modern period.
- In Bengal's history, the treaty of Allahabad (1765) is extremely significant as it ushered in a new administrative mechanism, which laid down the foundation of the British administrative system in India.
- The Battle of Buxar (1764) was fought between the forces under the command of the British East India Company led by Hector Munro, and the combined armies of Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal; Shuja-ud-Daula the Nawab of Awadh; and the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II.

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### 3.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Subedar:** *Subedar* is a historical rank in the Nepal Army, Indian Army and Pakistan Army, ranking below British commissioned officers and above non-commissioned officers.
- **Dual Government:** The dual government of Bengal was a double system of administration, which was introduced by Robert Clive. The British East India Company obtained the actual power; whereas the responsibility and charge of administration was entrusted to the Nawab of Bengal.
- **Sepoy:** It refers to an Indian soldier serving under British or other European orders.
- **Diwani Rights:** They were the rights granted to British East India Company to collect revenues and decide the civil cases.

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### 3.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short Answer Questions

1. Which was the first French company that succeeded in establishing permanent trade relations in India?
2. When did the Third Carnatic War begin?
3. What were the reasons that encouraged the British to come to India?
4. What were the features of the Dual government?
5. What were the causes that led to the Battle of Buxar?

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### Long Answer Questions

1. How did the French establish factories in India?
2. Give a detailed account of the British-French rivalry.
3. Give a detailed explanation of the Battle of Buxar, its political implications and consequences.
4. Describe the Battle of Plassey and its consequences.
5. Comment on the term: 'puppet nawabs' of Bengal with reference to the Treaty of Allahabad.

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### 3.8 FURTHER READINGS

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**BLOCK – II**  
**GOVERNOR GENERALS OF INDIA IN 1757 TO 1857**

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*British Governor  
Generals - I*

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**UNIT 4 BRITISH GOVERNOR  
GENERALS - I**

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**NOTES**

**Structure**

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Robert Clive and his Administration
- 4.3 Warren Hastings
- 4.4 Lord Cornwallis
- 4.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 4.6 Summary
- 4.7 Key Words
- 4.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 4.9 Further Readings

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**4.0 INTRODUCTION**

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As you have learnt, the East India Company was a joint-stock company which was established by a group of English traders for pursuing trade with the East Indies. It was observed that their trade was mainly focused towards the Indian subcontinent. Through the grant of a Royal Charter in 1599, the Company became one of the oldest companies among the similarly formed East India Companies of Europe. Wealthy English merchants and aristocrats owned the shares of the East India Company. The British government had no shares in the company and had only minimal control over their matters. Though the Company was ruling India from a long time exercising administrative and economic functions of India, it was only after the Battle of Plassey in 1757 and the Battle of Buxar in 1764 that their rule became effective in India. It was only after the Government of India Act, 1858 that India came under the direct rule of the British Crown.

The British were aware that because they were not natives of the land they could not win the confidence of the people. Therefore, they banked on superior force rather than on public support for exercising their control over India. On his return from India, the Duke of Wellington, who had served in India under his brother, Lord Wellesley, remarked: ‘The system of Government in India, the foundation of authority, and the modes of supporting it and of carrying on the operations of government is entirely different from the systems and modes adopted in Europe for the same purpose. The foundation

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and the instrument of all power there is the sword.’ In the hundred years that transpired between the Battle of Plassey (1757) and Great Revolt of 1857, India was witness to large scale political, economic, social and cultural upheavals under the East India Company. In this timeframe, the Company morphed from a mere trade and commerce business entity into a paramount power in India. The Company’s territorial possessions spread from Bengal in the east to all parts of India and came to be known as the British Indian Empire. In the beginning, the administrator was the Governor of Bengal and later as the territories expanded, the administrator became the Governor General of India. The paramount concern, however, remained trade and the profits that the company was accruing. It treaded cautiously whilst formulating policies making sure that these were in tandem with the aim of protecting and promoting the commercial interests of the Company. This unit will discuss the different governor-generals of India from 1757 to 1857.

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### 4.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Examine the reforms undertaken by Warren Hastings
- Explain the administrative and judicial changes brought in by Lord Cornwallis
- Discuss Robert Clive’s administration

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### 4.2 ROBERT CLIVE AND HIS ADMINISTRATION

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As you have learnt, Robert Clive was a key figure of the East India Company campaigns in the Battle of Plassey and the Battle of Buxar. It was because of his machinations and intrigue that the British were able to depose the powerful Nawabs of Bengal and establish a firm grip in India. He first became the Governor General of Bengal in 1758. His stint as the Governor for the first time lasted two years, during which he waged campaigns to strengthen British rule in the country. He left India in 1760 due to ill-health.

Clive returned to Calcutta in May 1765 as the Governor of Bengal for the second term. The problem of the Company’s relations with the Mughals awaited a solution. Clive made the final settlement through the Treaty of Allahabad with Shuja-ud-Daula (16 August 1765) Shuja’s old dominions were restored to him with the exception of Allahabad and Kora which were given to Shah Alam.

The Treaty of Allahabad (1765) constituted a landmark in the history of Bengal because it led to that administrative transition which prepared the ground for the introduction of British system of administration in India.



It marked the end of the Nawab's authority and ushered in a system under which power was ingeniously divorced from responsibility.

The English by the Treaty of Allahabad (with Shah Alam II) has secured the Diwani rights in return for an annual payment of ₹ 26 lakh to the emperor and a provision of ₹ 53 lakh for the nizamat functions. Prior to this treaty, the English had concluded another treaty in February 1765 with Nawab Najm-ud-Daula who surrendered virtually all the nizamat powers, including military, defence and foreign affairs, to the Company. Thus, the Company secured the diwani powers of the province from the emperor and the nizamat from the Nawab. The Company exercised the diwani and the nizamat functions through its agents who were Indians, but the actual power was in the hands of the Company. This system of administration, the rule of the Company and the Nawab, was known as the Dual or Double Government of Bengal.

This system caused administrative breakdown. Law and order deteriorated, trade and commerce was disrupted, merchants were reduced to beggary, the rich and prosperous industries, particularly those of silk and textiles were ruined, peasants were reduced to acute poverty and agriculture was rendered unremunerative. During the great famine of 1770, the ills of the Company's indirect rule were fully realized. In the course of this famine about 10 million people, comprising one-third of the total population of Bengal and Bihar, were swept away.

On the other hand, general distress was turned by many of the Company's officials and their gomastas into a source of illicit private profit. They monopolized all available grain and compelled the poor ryots to sell even the seed required for the next harvest. At a time when 'the living were feeding on the dead' the worst profiteering was allowed to continue without inquiry or punishment. Despite the large mortality and the consequent decrease of cultivation, not even five per cent of the land revenue was remitted and 10 per cent was added to it the next year. The surviving inhabitants of a village had to make up for the loss of revenue due to desertion or death of their neighbours. Cartier was the governor of Bengal then (1769–72).

The decrease in population caused by the famine seriously affected agricultural production and caused considerable delocation in the economic life of the province. It affected the zamindars: their collections fell as the number and paying capacity of the peasantry were seriously affected. It affected the Company's commercial profits too, because it swept away many cultivators and artisans.

### **East India Company as Sovereign Ruler of Bengal**

The dual system of government introduced by Clive proved to be a failure. When Warren Hastings was appointed governor of Bengal in 1772, he 'tore the mask of Mughal sovereignty' and decided to rule Bengal by the

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right of conquest. The dual system of administration was transferred to the servants of the Company. The Nawab was deprived of even nominal share in administration. The allowance of the Nawab was reduced from ₹ 32 lakh to ₹ 16 lakh. The Company also stopped the payment of ₹ 26 lakh annually to Emperor Shah Alam II. Allahabad and Kora were taken away from the Mughal Emperor and sold out to the Nawab of Awadh.

Thus, in less than two decades, the actual power in Bengal was transferred from the Nawabs of Bengal to the East India Company and this richest and industrially most advanced province of India was reduced to acute poverty and misery, which was further aggravated by famines and epidemics. The capture of Bengal opened the floodgates of British colonialism and imperialism in India, reducing the rich economy of the country to a colonial economy. Clive himself left India in 1768 and died in 1774.

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### 4.3 WARREN HASTINGS

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Working as an administrative clerk in the East India Company, Warren Hastings reached Calcutta in 1750. He gradually climbed up the ladder and was appointed as the President of Kasimbazar, by Governor of Bengal in 1772. Later, he became Governor General of Bengal in 1774 under the Regulating Act.

#### Administrative reforms

Warren Hastings embarked upon the task of initiating the following administrative measures:

- **Setting up a Board of Revenue at Calcutta:** Replacing the *diwans*, a Board of Revenue was created at Calcutta. It was entrusted with the task of overseeing the collection of land revenue.
- **Appointment of English collectors:** Revenue was to be collected by English collectors directly chosen by him.
- **Transfer of treasury from Murshidabad to Calcutta:** Bengal became the administrative capital when the coffer was shifted to Calcutta.
- **Reorganization of the Nawab's affairs:** Munni Begum, the widow of Mir Jaffer was given the responsibility to supervise household affairs and become the regent to the minor Nawab.
- **Stoppage of tribute to Shah Alam:** Hastings discontinued the payment of pension to Shah Alam II.
- **Reduction of pension of the Nawab of Bengal:** The pension to the Nawab of Bengal was decreased to ₹16 lakh.

## Judicial reforms

The judicial reforms, initiated by Hastings include:

- Clipping judicial powers of zamindars
- Setting up civil and criminal courts in every district
- Creating the Sadar Diwani Adalat
- Writing out judicial proceedings
- Selecting the Indian judges in criminal courts
- Changes initiated in existing rules and laws wherever deemed necessary
- Meting out justice to Muslims as per the Quran, and insisting on following the *shastras* to settle matters related to marriage, succession and religion

## Financial reforms

To improve the financial status of the Company, at a time when the treasury was almost bare and the Company was compelled to take loans, Hastings introduced the following measures:

- In lieu of a payment of ₹30 lakhs, the districts of Kara and Allahabad were sold to Shuja-ud-Daulah–Nawab of Awadh.
- The annual tribute to the Nawab of Bengal was reduced to ₹16 lakhs from ₹32 lakhs.
- To enhance the financial position of the Company, he wanted to develop trade relations with Bhutan and Tibet where he sent a mission.
- When Shah Alam sought Maratha protection, he stopped the payment of the annual pension of ₹25 lakh payable to him.
- In lieu of the district of Benaras and a sum of ₹40 lakh, he agreed to assist Shuja-ud-Daulah .
- To reduce expenditure the amount of money given as pension to Company servants were reduced.
- Currency was regularized.
- Unyielding offices were closed to minimize expenditure.

## Revenue reforms

The following revenue reforms were proposed by Hastings:

- British land revenue collectors were directly chosen by him to collect land revenue and execute the reforms.
- The Board of Revenue at Calcutta was appointed to supervise land revenue administration.

## NOTES

## NOTES

- The Quinquennial land revenue system was initiated.
- To help the members of the Revenue Board, local officers called *Rai Rayan*, were appointed.
- The Quinquennial system was replaced by the one-year settlement which was decided in favour of the highest bidder.
- Understanding the sufferings of the people, other taxes were removed, but land revenue was collected at a set rate.

### Commercial reforms

Hastings introduced the following commercial reforms:

- **Decreasing customs duties:** Apart from salt, betel nut and tobacco, duties on all goods were decreased by 2.5 per cent. Both locals and Europeans had to pay customs duties.
- **Removing numerous customs posts:** As trade got affected owing to a large number of customs posts, only five customs posts were retained, namely, Calcutta, Hughli, Murshidabad, Patna and Dhaka.

### Abolition of the dastak system

With the removal of *dastaks*, the Company servants had no option but to pay duties for their personal goods, which reduced corruption and augmented the Company's revenues.

**Sending commercial mission to other countries:** To improve trade, commercial missions were dispatched to countries like Bhutan, Tibet and Egypt.

### Social reforms

To encourage Islamic studies, he founded the Calcutta Madrassa in 1781, which was the first educational institution founded by the British Government. Thereafter, the Sanskrit College was established at Benaras by Jonathan Duncan in 1792. Under Hastings' patronage William Wilkins had translated the *Gita* and Nathaniel Halhed had compiled a digest of Hindu laws.

### Consequences of these Reforms

Though he succeeded in improving the governing machinery, he did not receive adequate government support. Also, he had to entertain the whims and fancies of his seniors who wanted to fill up the posts by their favoured candidates and not by those chosen on the basis of their merit. Struggling against all odds, he managed to provide his successor, Lord Cornwallis, with a strong administrative structure. Hence, it may well be said that if Lord Clive had established the territorial foundation of the British Empire in Bengal, Hastings had given the British administrative structure a solid foundation.

## Impeachment

In protest against the Pitts India Bill, Warren Hastings resigned from office in 1785. Accused of the Rohilla War, Nand Kumar's murder, the case of Chet Singh and for having accepted bribes, he was impeached for seven years from 1788 to 1795. By the time he was acquitted (23 April 1795), he had no money left and had become a pauper.

## Regulating Act of 1773

The British government directed the affairs of the Company through the Regulating Act, 1773. It was particularly initiated with to serve this purpose. Warren Hastings was formally declared to be as Governor General of Bengal and he was to be assisted by an executive council comprising four members.

The Act empowered the Governor General-in-council to make rules, ordinances and regulations that were meant to bring order and establish civil government. Through this Act, Hastings was able to convert a trading company into an administrative body that formed the basis of the British Empire in India.

## Main Provisions

The main specifications of the Regulating Act, 1773 are listed below:

- The King of England was in charge of the East India Company. High officials of the company, judges and member of the court of directors were to be nominated.
- The qualifying sum to gain voting right in the court of proprietors was increased from £500 to £1000.
- The directors, who were earlier elected annually, had to continue office for four years, and a quarter of the number were to be re-elected annually.
- A Supreme Court comprising a Chief Justice and three other judges was established in Bengal. Apart from the Governor General and the members of his Council, it entailed civil, criminal, admiralty and ecclesiastical jurisdiction over all British subjects in the Company's dominions.
- The Governor General and his four councillors were to look after civil and military affairs and they who were mentioned in the Act in the first instance. They were to hold office for five years and during their tenure they could only be removed by the king on the representation of the court of directors.
- Though he had a casting vote which were to be used to break a stalemate, the Governor General had to abide by the decision of the majority of the Council.

## NOTES

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- In matters of war and peace, the Governor General's decision was considered final, above the opinions expressed by the Governors of Madras and Bombay. Salaries were augmented if officers showed better merit. Company servants were not permitted to accept presents or bribes and indulge in private trade.
- Only with the prior permission of the Home Secretary could the Governor General- in-council make rules.
- The Governor General-in-council had the right to issue rules, ordinances and regulations, though they had to be registered in the Supreme Court.

### **Important Features of the Act**

Important features of this Act include:

- It made it clear that the administration of Indian territories was not a personal affair of the Company servants. The British Parliament was empowered to make amendments.
- This Act initiated the course of territorial integration and administrative centralization in India.
- It started a process of parliamentary control over administrative decisions taken by the Company.
- The Act set up a Supreme Court of Judicature comprising a Chief Justice and three other members. The Act provided the license to the British government to have a say in the internal affairs of the Company.
- A council of four members was established to help the Governor General. Though these members were to hold office for five years, they could only be removed by the British Crown.
- The Supreme Government was entrusted 'from time to time to make and issue rules, ordinances, and regulations the good order and civil government' of the British territories.
- The Presidency of Bengal was made superior to other presidencies and the governor of Bengal was appointed as Governor General. Governors and the Councils of Madras and Bombay were had to follow the decisions taken by the Governor General and Council of Bengal.

### **The Defects of the regulating Act**

The defects of the Regulating Act of 1773 have been outlined below:

- The Governor General did not have any veto power. Hastings often had to struggle with his councillors who could easily impose their decisions on him by majority voting.
- The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and its relation with the Governor General in Council was not specified.

- The presidencies of Madras and Bombay often declared war, without consulting the Governor General and Council of Bengal. In case of Marathas and Haidar Ali, the Bombay government and Madras Council, respectively, chose to decide on their own.
- The reports sent by the Governor General in council in India was not considered seriously and was not analyzed systematically.
- The Court of Directors had become ‘more or less permanent oligarchy’ Also, the Court of proprietors enjoyed immunity from any scrutiny based on moral grounds. These privileges gave them allowance to participate in intrigues and create factions which plagued the home government internally.

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### **Relations with Gurkhas**

The Gurkhas wanted to expand their territory. Thus, they annexed approximately two hundred villages from Darjeeling to Seimle, and Gorakhpur as well. Lord Minto sent them an ultimatum of protest but they ignored it. They invaded two districts named Sheroraj and Butwal. Hastings again sent a message to the Gurkhas to leave these districts, but they did not pay heed to his message. Thus, Hastings declared war on Nepal.

For the preparation of the war, Hastings borrowed one crore rupees from the Nawab of Awadh. He decided to send four armies in the war against Nepal. The Gurkhas defeated three of these armies, however, they were defeated by the fourth. Then, Hastings forced the Gurkhas to sign the Treaty of Sanguali in the year 1816.

### **The Treaty of Sugauli (1816)**

As per this treaty, the Nepalese had to surrender districts of Garhwal and Kumaon to the Company. These districts were situated on the west coast of the River Kali. A British resident was appointed at Kathmandu. However, the English agreed that he would not interfere in the internal affairs of the country. Also, Nepal lost the right to employ Americans or Europeans in its country without seeking permission from the English. Some of the features of this treaty were as follows:

- The treaty benefitted the English in many ways, for instance, the Nepalese supported the English in the ‘mutiny’ of 1857.
- The East India Company started employing Gorkha soldiers in the English army.
- The territory under the British increased.
- The treaty ensured perpetual peace and friendship between the Company and Nepal.



## NOTES

### Relations with Sikhs

Anglo-Sikh relations can best be described as strained not just during the time of Warren Hastings, but even before and after. Moreover, the history of the Anglo-Sikh relations also reflects the changing face of the East India Company from a mere commercial enterprise into a political power. The consolidation of Bengal and Oudh under the Company was crucial in establishing the British as a formidable power gradually setting up base in the Indian subcontinent. By August 1765, through the grant of the *diwani* rights to the Company, Shah Alam concluded the transfer of power to the British, thereby making them the supreme ruling authority over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. During 1765—1767, the numerous invasions of India by Ahmad Shah Durrani was observed by Robert Clive (the victor of Plassey and Governor of Bengal), with curious anticipation.

Warren Hastings, became the Governor General in 1773. He was concerned about the increasing power and influence of the Sikhs. He made great efforts to know more about them. Examples of this can be seen in the different publications and travelogues that were submitted to the Company on the Sikhs. Louis Henri Polier, a Swiss engineer in the Company's military service submitted a detailed account of the Sikhs in the year 1776. Even though never published, this paper was quoted by George Forster, a civil servant of the Company who at the behest of Warren Hastings, journeyed through the regions of Punjab, Kashmir and Afghanistan disguised as a Turkish traveller and wrote *A Journey from Bengal to England*.

### Relations with Rajputs

The establishment of British influence over Rajput states and some minor states in Central India was presided over by Lord Warren Hastings. Due to a large number of internal and external factors, the Rajputs became prey to external aggression at hands of the Pindaris, Pathans and Marathas. The rulers of Rajasthan had lost their former glory because of petty skirmishes within their territories as well as pseudo norms of heroism and chivalry. These factors combined with other serious administrative lapses led to anarchy, plunder and economic ruin. Bankrupt and vulnerable, the Rajputs were ready to acknowledge British supremacy.

In consolidating the Mughal Empire in India, the Rajputs had played a significant role. The English realized the strategic advantage of forming an alliance with the Rajput states would give them the boost they needed to establish control over central India. Moreover this (the alliance with the Rajputs) was something that the Marathas had failed to achieve in their expansionist strategies.

Thus, with the sanction of the home authorities he opened negotiations with the following Rajput States, which, one by one, entered into treaties

of defensive alliance, perpetual friendship, protection and subordinate cooperation with the Company: the State of Kotah, then under the able guidance of Zalim Singh, on 26 December, 1817; Udaipur on 16 January, 1818, Bundi on 10 February, 1818; Kishangarh, near Ajmer, and Bikaner, in March, 1818; Jaipur on 2 April, 1818; the three kingdoms of Pratapgarh, Banswara and Dungarpur, branches of the Udaipur house and situated on the border of Gujarat, on 5 October, 5 December, and 11 December, 1818, respectively; Jaisalmer on 12 December, 1818 and Sirohi in 1823.

In other words, the Rajput states, who as per Hastings' account, proved to be an asset to the Company, subordinated their independence to British supremacy and secured their protection. It is difficult to agree with Prinsep that the 'good government and tranquillity' of Rajputana were 'the exclusive aims' of the Company in interfering in its affairs. In fact, the guiding considerations of Lord Hastings in his relations with the Rajput States were political expediency and convenience and strategic advantages.

### **Relations with Pindaris**

Pindaris were a group of plunderers. The Pindaris included fugitives from justice, disbanded soldiers and idle people. They came to be known to people during wars between the Marathas and the Mughals.

### **Causes of the Pindari war**

Lord Hastings was angry at the plunders of Pindaris in the dominions of Nizam, Northern Circars and the Gangetic valley. Thus, he took permission from the Court of Directors of the East India Company to exterminate them. After getting permission from the Directors he waged a war against the Pindaris.

### **Events of the war**

To begin his preparations for the War, he tried to understand several powers which were active in India. After this, he made a military plan to surround the Pindaris. This campaign by Hastings came to be known as the Pindari War or the Third Anglo-Maratha War.

He made a plan to attack the Pindaris from the west from Gujarat, from the east and North from Bengal and from the south from the Deccan. Thus, he wanted to surround the Pindaris from all sides. He created a strong and big army of 1,20,000 men and 300 artillery pieces to kill Pindaris. The Pindaris made three groups and their leaders named Chitu Pindari, Karim Khan Pindari and Wasil Muhammad Pindari led these groups in the war.

When Karim Khan Pindari came to know that the British are going to attack the Pindaries, he tried to persuade other Pindari leaders to make a plan for defence. However, the Pindari leaders did not agree to him. Karim Khan and Wasil Muhammad went to Gwalior for the war and Chitu Pindari

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united with the forces of Holkar. After some time, all Pindari parties went back to south as they had a base in south. Towards the end of December, Jaswant Rao Bhau invited Karim Khan Pindari, thus, he went to north and Chitu Pindari went to the area near Jawar. After making a number of failed attempts to reach an agreement with the British, almost all the Pindari leaders gradually surrendered in February, 1819.

The English made arrangements at Gorakhpur for the settlement of Pindari leaders and their families. They gave them pensions and lands.

### Check Your Progress

1. Why was the Treaty of Allahabad a landmark in the history of Bengal?
2. List some of the judicial reforms initiated by Warren Hastings.
3. List one provision of the Treaty of Sugauli (1816).

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## 4.4 LORD CORNWALLIS

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Charles Cornwallis was sent to India by the Court of Directors in the year 1786. He was entrusted the responsibility of executing the policy of peace given in Pitt's India Act and to restructure the administrative system in India. Some of his major responsibilities were as follows:

- To find out a solution for land revenue problem.
- To set up a judiciary which is honest as well as efficient.
- To restructure the commercial division of the East India Company.

In order to restructure the administrative system, Cornwallis used the basic structure of administration designed by Warren Hastings and made some modifications in it. The structure designed by Cornwallis remained in force till 1858.

### Reforms in Judicial Administration, Public Revenue and Other Services

Cornwallis became Governor General of Bengal and he introduced a number of reforms, which are as follows:

- **Reforms in the judicial system:** Cornwallis believed that District Collector should have more authority than they already had. The Court of Directors had also instructed the same. Thus, in 1787, Collectors were appointed judges of *Diwani Adalats* and were given charge of districts. The District Collectors were given powers of Magistrates so that they could judge criminal cases. However, some limitations were imposed on them in trying these cases.

Some more changes were made in the administrative structure from 1790 to 1792. *Foujdari Adalats* were abolished and four circuit courts were established in their place. Out of these four circuit courts, three were for Bengal and one was for Bihar. The European servants were given the authority to preside over these courts. These European servants took help from Muftis and Qazis while trying the cases. These courts went to districts two times in a year and tried cases.

The *Sadr Nizamat Adalat* at Murshidabad was also abolished. A Mohammedan judge used to preside over this court. In place of this court, another court was established in Calcutta. These courts consisted of the Governor General and members of the Supreme Council. The Chief *Qazis* and two Muftis assisted them.

Thus, the new judicial system had petty courts, districts courts, four provincial courts and *Sadr Diwani Adalat*. *Daroga* courts and district courts, four circuit courts and *Sadr Nizamat Adalat* were established for trying criminal cases.

- **Cornwallis code:** In 1793, Cornwallis made a code of regulations for guiding those servants of the East India Company who were working in the judicial department. Cornwallis took Sir George Barlow's help for preparing this code. The commercial and administrative services were demarcated clearly in this code. Before the preparation of this code, Cornwallis realized that the Board of Revenue was not able to settle a large number of cases. In order to solve this matter, *mal adalats* were formed in every district. Collectors were made the heads of these courts and they were given revenue powers as well. The administrative structure was in existence even before Cornwallis but he was the one who made the system harmonious and cohesive.

Cornwallis introduced a system in which people could lodge a complaint against collectors and servants for not fulfilling their duties. The government could also be sued in the court. He abolished inhuman punishments such as capital punishment and mutilation of limbs. The European people living in the districts had to follow the new judicial system.

- **Reforms in Public Services:** The servants of East India Company wanted to earn a lot of money. Since, the salaries of these servants were low, they accepted bribe from people in order to earn more money. They also confiscated the lands of zamindars in an unjust manner. In order to solve these problems, Cornwallis raised their salaries and terminated some of the servants. After this, he hired employees for the Company solely on the basis of their merits. He did not allow any of the employees to carry out trade in their private capacity.

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He did not trust Indians and behaved with them in a scornful manner. Thus, his behaviour towards Indians was criticized. He did not recruit Indian on high posts and gave such posts to Europeans. He divided districts into small units and took away police powers from the zamindars. A superintendent and representative of the company, who resided in those districts, were given the charge of these units.

- **Reforms in the Commercial Department of the Company:** When the Board of Trade was established, it were asked to obtain goods from Indian and European contractors. These contractors supplied goods of inferior quality at a very high price. The Board instead of checking these practices, took bribe through them. Due to these corrupted practices of the commercial department, Cornwallis took action against the Board of Trade. He reduced the number of Board members from eleven to five. The method of obtaining goods was also changed and the Board was instructed to obtain goods from commercial agents and residents. This way, he brought reforms in the commercial department.
- **Reforms in the Collection of Revenue and Permanent Settlement:** It is really important to find a suitable method for revenue collection in order to improve the condition of farmers. The methods used by Robert Clive and Warren Hastings worsened the situation of farmers. Thus, in 1786, the Court of Directors recommended that Cornwallis should make ten years settlement with zamindars which can later be made permanent. Cornwallis with the help of John Shore tried to find a suitable method for revenue collection. To solve this problem, they had a discussion on the following three questions:
  1. Should the settlement be made with zamindars or tillers?
  2. How much share should the state get in the produce of land?
  3. Should the settlement be permanent or for a fixed term?

On the first question, John Shore believed that settlement should be made with zamindars as they own the lands. Cornwallis was an English landlord, thus, he agreed with John Shore. Moreover, the Court of Directors also supported Cornwallis.

On the second question, Shore believed that the state's share should be decided on the basis of the actual collection of the year 1790–1791. Cornwallis was also of the same opinion.

However, their opinions differed on the third question. Shore believed that settlement should be made for ten years, but Cornwallis wanted permanent settlement of revenue. Finally, in the year 1790, he declared settlement to be for ten years but in 1793, the settlement was made permanent. Therefore, permanent settlement was made in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Benaras and Northern part of Tamil Nadu.

## Permanent Settlement

Some of the important features of Permanent Settlement were as follows:

- The settlement was made with zamindars as they were recognized as owners of land as long as they pay revenue.
- Zamindars were asked to pay land revenue to the government. The amount of land revenue was made fixed and they were promised that it would not be increased. In case zamindars failed to pay revenue, the government had the authority to sell their land through public auction. They were required to pay 89 per cent of the collected rent to the state and could keep the rest with themselves.
- Zamindars were allowed to sell or mortgage their land. They were also allowed to give their land to someone else if they wanted to.
- It was expected that zamindars would make efforts to improve the conditions of the farmers or tillers who were working on their land.
- The Government promised them that it would not interfere in its matters till the time they pay their revenue in time.

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### Merits of Permanent Settlement

Some of the merits of permanent settlement are as follows:

- Under Permanent Settlement, zamindars had to pay fixed amount as land revenue. In cases when zamindars were not able to pay their land revenue, the government used to sell their lands to recover their land revenue. Thus, the British government was sure of its income.
- The fixed income in the form of fixed land revenue gave economic stability to the British government. This made the province of Bengal prosperous.
- Permanent Settlement saved the British government from the expenditure which it had to incur in order to extract land revenue from zamindars. Earlier the British government spent a lot of money in order to assess land on a regular basis.
- This settlement encouraged zamindars to improve the agricultural land to earn more money. Earlier the zamindars did not make efforts to improve their land as the British government used to take away most of their profit in the name of land revenue.
- This settlement made zamindars wealthy and they could invest money in trade, commerce and industry. It helped the provinces to prosper at a fast pace.
- The settlement made zamindars loyal to the British so much so that they supported the British even during the rebels in India.

- Though the government could not increase the amount of land revenue yet it could extract more money from the zamindars in the form of taxes.

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### Demerits of Permanent Settlement

Some of the demerits of permanent settlement were as follows:

- Since the zamindars did not take part in the cultivation of land, they moved to cities to spend a luxurious life. Before moving to cities, they appointed some middlemen to take care of their land. These middlemen exploited the farmers and tillers and made their lives miserable.
- The system of the Permanent Settlement ignored the interests of peasants, farmers and tillers. They were left on the misery of zamindars who oppressed them for earning more.
- In the long run, the Permanent Settlement proved disadvantageous to the government as they could not increase the amount of land revenue when the prices of the crops increased.

#### Check Your Progress

4. What was the Cornwallis code?
5. What were some of Cornwallis' major responsibilities when he was appointed Governor General?

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## 4.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. The Treaty of Allahabad (1765) constituted a landmark in the history of Bengal because it led to that administrative transition which prepared the ground for the introduction of British system of administration in India.
2. The judicial reforms, initiated by Hastings include:
  - Clipping judicial powers of zamindars
  - Setting up civil and criminal courts in every district
  - Creating the Sadar Diwani Adalat
  - Writing out judicial proceedings
3. As per the Treaty of Sugauli, the Nepalese had to surrender districts of Garhwal and Kumaon to the Company.
4. In 1793, Cornwallis made a code of regulations for guiding those servants of the East India Company who were working in the judicial



department. Cornwallis took Sir George Barlow's help for preparing this code. The commercial and administrative services were demarcated clearly in this code.

5. Some of Cornwallis' major responsibilities were as follows:
- To find out a solution for land revenue problem.
  - To set up a judiciary which is honest as well as efficient.
  - To restructure the commercial division of the East India Company.

## NOTES

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### 4.6 SUMMARY

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- Robert Clive was a key figure of the East India Company campaigns in the Battle of Plassey and the Battle of Buxar. It was because of his machinations and intrigue that the British were able to depose the powerful Nawabs of Bengal and establish a firm grip in India.
- The Treaty of Allahabad (1765) constituted a landmark in the history of Bengal because it led to that administrative transition which prepared the ground for the introduction of British system of administration in India.
- The dual system of government introduced by Clive proved to be a failure. When Warren Hastings was appointed governor of Bengal in 1772, he 'tore the mask of Mughal sovereignty' and decided to rule Bengal by the right of conquest.
- Working as an administrative clerk in the East India Company, Warren Hastings reached Calcutta in 1750. He gradually climbed up the ladder and was appointed as the President of Kasimbazar, by Governor of Bengal in 1772. Later, he became Governor General of Bengal in 1774 under the Regulating Act. After becoming Governor General, he embarked upon the task of initiating various administrative reform measures.
- Anglo-Sikh relations can best be described as strained not just during the time of Warren Hastings, but even before and after.
- The establishment of British influence over Rajput states and some minor states in Central India was presided over by Lord Warren Hastings.
- Charles Cornwallis was sent to India by the Court of Directors in the year 1786. He was entrusted the responsibility of executing the policy of peace given in Pitt's India Act and to restructure the administrative system in India.
- In order to restructure the administrative system, Cornwallis used the basic structure of administration designed by Warren Hastings and

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made some modifications in it. The structure designed by Cornwallis remained in force till 1858.

- Under Permanent Settlement, zamindars had to pay fixed amount as land revenue. In cases when zamindars were not able to pay their land revenue, the government used to sell their lands to recover their land revenue.

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### 4.7 KEY WORDS

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- **Ryots:** It refers to an Indian peasant or tenant farmer.
- **Permanent Settlement:** It was an agreement between the East India Company and Bengali landlords to fix revenues to be raised from land, with far-reaching consequences for both agricultural methods and productivity in the entire British Empire and the political realities of the Indian countryside.
- **Gorkha:** They refer to soldiers native to the Indian subcontinent of Nepalese nationality and ethnic Nepalis of Indian nationality.

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### 4.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short Answer Questions

1. Discuss the two tenures of Robert Clive's governorship.
2. Write a short-note on Cornwallis's reforms in public services.
3. What were the causes of the Pindari war?

#### Long Answer Questions

1. Examine the various reforms undertaken by Warren Hastings.
2. Describe the features and defects of the Regulating Act of 1777.
3. Examine the Permanent Settlement system in detail.

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### 4.9 FURTHER READINGS

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## UNIT 5 BRITISH GOVERNOR GENERALS - II

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### NOTES

#### Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Objectives
- 5.2 Lord Wellesley: Subsidiary Alliance System
- 5.3 Lord Warren Hastings: Reforms
- 5.4 Lord William Bentinck
  - 5.4.1 Reforms of Lord William Bentinck
- 5.5 Lord Dalhousie: Doctrine of Lapse
- 5.6 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 5.7 Summary
- 5.8 Key Words
- 5.9 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 5.10 Further Readings

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### 5.0 INTRODUCTION

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Acts by British were designed to cover every sphere of life as each act was department specific. Among these, the more significant acts were those that were created to regulate education, land revenue, indigo plantation and press. The underlined purpose of each act was to consolidate the supremacy of the East India Company in India. To ensure a seamless delegation of power in India, the British had their representatives in the form of Governor Generals and viceroys. These expansionist policies were seen as instruments of introducing change in British Acts in India.

In 1765, the year Clive arrived in India can be said to begin a new era in the history of British India. Many scholars have reflected upon the Mughal nature of Hastings' rule. Far from being English, the nature of this new regime was rather like the dying Mughal Empire and could be critiqued as private dominion of the East India Company. In other words, it was hardly a colony of the British as the administrative structure was largely Mughal (not British) and its officials were Indians (not Europeans). During the thirteen year tenure of Warren Hastings (not to be confused with the other governor-general Warren Hasting), his internal administration, his dealings with his council, and his foreign policy were noteworthy. Bentinck and Dalhousie were other notable Governor-Generals. We will study each of them in turn.

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## 5.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the reforms introduced by Lord Warren Hastings
- Examine the system of subsidiary alliance
- Discuss the doctrine of lapse
- Explain some of the reforms introduced by Lord Dalhousie

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## 5.2 LORD WELLESLEY: SUBSIDIARY ALLIANCE SYSTEM

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Though the Subsidiary Alliance System was formed in the second half of the eighteenth century, yet the credit of this policy goes to Lord Wellesley as it developed from 1798 to 1805 when Lord Wellesley was the Governor General of India.

The system of Subsidiary Alliance was introduced by Dupleix, the French Governor by giving his army to Indian rulers on rent. The same policy was adopted by many Governor Generals of the East India Company such as Robert Clive. In 1765, the English signed a treaty with Awadh at Allahabad. As per this treaty, the English promised that their troops would protect Awadh and the Nawab would bear the expenses of the troops. They also appointed an English resident in the court of the Nawab and was asked to bear his expenses as well.

In 1787, when Lord Cornwallis was the Governor General, the Nawab of Carnatic promised that he would not take help from any foreign power without obtaining permission from the Company. Similarly, in 1798, the Nawab of Awadh promised Sir John Shore that no European would be employed in Awadh.

In this way, the Subsidiary alliance system was in existence even before the Governor Generalship of Lord Wellesley. However, the system developed fully when he added some elements in this system. Indian states were asked to yield some of the territories to the Company if they wanted to sign this treaty. This way, the company succeeded in expanding its empire in India. Let us study the development stages of the policy of Subsidiary Alliance:

**Stage 1:** The Company offered its army on rent to Indian states. These states were asked to pay cash in return. In 1768, Hyderabad signed this pact

**Stage 2:** The Company offered that it would keep its army 'near the boundaries of Indian states' in order to 'protect' the states. In lieu

of this service, the state was asked to pay an annual fee. In 1784, Sindhia accepted this offer.

**Stage 3:** The Company offered that it would keep its army ‘inside the boundaries of Indian States’ to ‘protect’ the state. The states were asked to pay annual fee in return. In 1798, Hyderabad agreed to sign treaty with the company.

**Stage 4:** The Company offered to keep its army inside the boundaries of the Indian states to protect the state. In lieu of this ‘service’, the company asked the states to give some part of their territory. In 1800, Hyderabad signed this treaty and in 1801, Oudh also signed the treaty with the Company.

## NOTES

### Features of the Subsidiary Alliance

Some features of the Subsidiary Alliance were as follows:

- The Company promised to protect the states from outside attack.
- The rulers had to bear the expenses of the British force which was employed for the protection of the state.
- The rulers could not employ any foreigner in their states without the permission of the Company. They could not build diplomatic ties with other States.
- The rulers had to bear the expenses of the British resident which was appointed in their court.
- The Company followed the policy of non-interference as far as the internal matters of the states were concerned.

### Advantages of the Subsidiary Alliance to the Company

The Subsidiary Alliance benefited the Company in the following ways:

- The Subsidiary Alliance proved advantageous for the Company in many ways.
- With the help of this system, the Company maintained a large army at the expense of the Nawabs. They could use this army in annexing other territories or protect their own empire.
- As per the treaty, the Nawabs were not allowed to employ any foreigner in their states without their permission. This reduced the threat which the Company had from Europeans and the French.
- Since the states were not allowed to build ties with other states, the Company felt secured in India as Indian states could not stand united to rebel against the Company.
- The treaty made Nawabs puppets in the hands of the Company as they had to seek permission from the Company on a number of issues.

## NOTES

- In lieu of the ‘services’, the Company asked for fertile lands of the territories of Nawabs so that they could earn more money with the help of these lands. This way, Nawabs lost a lot of money of the States and this made the states poor.

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### 5.3 LORD WARREN HASTINGS: REFORMS

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Lord Hastings was the Governor General of India from 1813 to 1826. He followed the footsteps of Lord Wellesley. After taking retirement, he took up the position of Governor of Malta.

#### Reforms by Hastings

The reforms introduced by Lord Hastings were as follows:

- **Reforms in the judicial system:** He made a lot of effort to improve the administrative system of India. In spite of the fact that he was preoccupied due to a number of wars, he was successful in making some reforms in the administrative system. The judicial system at that time had a number of flaws. There were a numerous pending cases in the court. Let us study about the reforms made in the judicial system by Lord Hastings:
  - o Lord Hastings gave more powers to the Collectors.
  - o After taking permission from the Directors of the Company, he appointed a Munsif at each police station. He gave them the authority to hear cases related to property as well claims in case the claim is not more than ₹64. The *Diwani Adalats* were given the authority either to confirm the decision or to re-hear the case.
  - o In some of the cases, people were not given the right to re-appeal.
  - o The Registrars were also given more powers. The *Diwani Adalats* had the authority to send some cases to registrars in case the case involved claims up to ₹50. In extra-ordinary cases, the Registrars could even hear cases which involved claims up to ₹500.
  - o People had the right to file appeals against registrars’ decisions directly in the provincial courts.
  - o The cases of claims up to ₹5,000 were heard by the *Diwani Adalat*. In case, the claim was more than ₹50,000, the case was sent to Appellate Provincial Courts. *Sadr Diwani Adalat* had the powers to transfer cases from *Diwani Adalat* to Appellate Provincial Court.
  - o In the year 1821, the Governors General were given the authority to give magisterial powers either to the Collector of the revenue departments or to any high official of the revenue department.
  - o In 1815, changes were brought about in the criteria of the eligibility to become judge in *Sadr Diwani Adalat*. The judge of *Sadr Diwani*

*Adalat* needed to have three years of experience in Provincial Court or nine years of experience in judicial work.

- o The Magistrates were given the authority to give strict punishments such as corporeal punishment up to 30 canes.

- **Reforms in revenue collection:** Hastings was of the opinion that permanent settlement should be made but the Directors of the Company did not allow him to do so. Therefore, he introduced the Mahalwari System. As per this system, the settlement was made for the period of twenty years in Punjab and for thirty years in Agra. *Nambardar*, the head of the village, was given the responsibility to collect revenue from all the zamindars and deposit the amount in the Government treasury. The disputes related to revenue were heard in *Diwani Adalat*. In view of the interests of farmers, the Government passed an Act, known as Bengal Tenancy Act, in 1882.

Similarly, in Madras, the Government introduced the Ryotwari System for revenue collection. Hastings introduced reforms in the system of revenue collection in Mumbai as well.

- **Reforms in the field of education:** One of the achievements of Lord Hastings was that he opened a number of vernacular schools near Calcutta. He also opened a college and stressed on the importance of English language in this college. Some of his predecessors forced restrictions on Press but Hastings removed most of the restrictions to give liberty to Press.

#### Check Your Progress

1. Who introduced the system of subsidiary alliances?
2. When was Lord Hastings the Governor General of India?

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## 5.4 LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK

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Lord William Bentinck became Governor General of India in 1828. He took a number of steps to suppress *sati* system. In 1806, he was appointed as the Governor of Madras. He ordered the Madras regiment not to wear caste marks and they mutinied against him. This led to the termination of his services by the Court of Directors.

### Relations with Indian States

Lord Hastings and Lord Amherst made a lot of effort for the expansion of the Company's empire, and Bentinck worked towards the consolidation of this empire.

## NOTES



## NOTES

William Bentinck did not interfere in the affairs of many of the Indian states. For instance, he did not interfere in the affairs of Jaipur even when the British resident, appointed in the state, was attacked during anarchical situation in the state.

In 1829, when Nasir-ud-Daulah succeeded his father to the throne of Hyderabad, he requested Bentinck to remove the British officers from the state. Following his policy of non-interference, he agreed to the request of the rulers and ordered the British officials to leave the state. Not only this, he followed the same policy in Kota, Bundi, Bhopal and Jodhpur as well even when the situations in these states demanded his interference from the point of the British. However, he did not follow this policy in case of Mysore and Coorg and annexed these places in 1831 and 1834 respectively.

### **Sindh and Punjab**

During the Governor Generalship of Bentinck, Sindh was divided into small states. These states were ruled by Amirs. The reason behind the division of Sindh was that Amirs were suspicious of Maharaja Ranjit Singh due to his growing powers. Bentinck, in order to take advantage of their suspicion, sent Colonel Pottenger for convincing the Amirs of Sindh to sign a commercial treaty with them.

When Amirs did not agree with his proposal, Pottenger forced them to sign the treaty in 1832. As a result of this treaty, the English could trade in Sindh. However, the Amirs did not allow the English merchants to live in Sindh on permanent basis.

After this treaty, Bentinck made efforts to establish friendly relations with Ranjit Singh. In spite of the fact that the English did not like Ranjit Singh's power yet Bentinck wanted to establish friendship with him so that he could take his help in case of Rajputs' invasion in the British frontier. For this purpose, he sent Robert Burnes to Lahore.

Though, Robert Burnes was successful in establishing friendship with Ranjit Singh yet Bentinck wanted to meet Ranjit Singh personally. He went to meet Ranjit Singh in 1831 and assured him that the English are also interested in Sindh as he is.

### **5.4.1 Reforms of Lord William Bentinck**

As a Governor General, Bentinck introduced a number of reforms. Some of the reforms introduced by Bentinck are as follows:

#### **Administrative and Judicial Reforms**

Due to the expansion of the East India Company's empire, the administrative system of the Company had a number of shortcomings. Thus, it was important for Bentinck to introduce some administrative reforms:

- A Board of revenue was appointed at Allahabad in order to administer revenue department in the north-western province. He also set up separate *Diwani Adalat* and *Sadr Nizamat Adalat* at Allahabad.
- Cornwallis had a low opinion about the Indians, thus he did not hire them on high posts. However, William Bentinck did not agree with the policy of Cornwallis and started hiring Indians on high posts. This decision by Bentinck helped the English in many ways. Deputing Europeans on high posts meant a lot of expenditure for the Company because they had to pay high salaries to them. On the other hand, Indians who were deputed on higher posts were given less salaries as compared to the Europeans. This helped the Company in reducing their expenditure.

Also, giving high posts to Indians made some of the Indians loyal towards the Company and less suspicious of the Company's activities. The Charter Act of 1833 also supported this policy of Bentinck as it stated, 'No native of India nor any natural born subject of His Majesty, should be disabled from holding any place, office of employment by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent or colour'.

- Bentinck also allowed people to file suits in the court in their Vernacular language.
- He played an important role in the abolition of inhuman punishments such as whipping.

### Financial Reforms

When Lord Bentinck became the Governor General, the Company had a yearly deficit of ₹10,00,000 in its budget. Thus, it was important for Bentinck to improve the financial condition of the Company. For this, he made two committees to check the Company's expenditures on military and civil affairs. He also asked these committees to suggest some ways to reduce the expenditure of the Company. Some of the financial reforms introduced by Bentinck were as follows:

- Employing Indians on higher posts helped the Company in reducing its expenditure as Indians were paid lesser salaries as compared to their European contemporaries.
- Bentinck also tried to improve the system of revenue collection. He classified lands according to their production and fixed the rates of revenue accordingly.
- In order to reduce the expenditure on the military affairs, he reduced the allowances of all the employees in the military department by half. Initially, this step caused opposition from them but soon the discontentment subsided.

### NOTES

## NOTES

- Lord Cornwallis set up some Provincial Courts during his tenure as a Governor General. However, the personnel of these courts did not have much work, thus, Bentinck closed down these courts. He increased the powers of magistrates of other courts. This helped in reducing the expenditure of the Company to a great extent.
- Before the Company was granted the *Diwani* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, a lot of people had lands on which no revenue was charged. Due to this, the government was not able to take revenue from these lands. Thus, in 1829 a new regulation was issued by Bentinck. According to this regulation, the collectors were asked to check the documents according to which these lands were given the status of 'revenue-free lands'. A number of people failed to produce the required documents, thus, the Government instructed them to pay revenue for these lands. This helped in increasing the revenue of the Company.
- After some survey, Bentinck decided to settle the land revenue of the north-west province for the period of thirty years. This ensured the government that it would get fixed revenue from this province.
- To increase the revenue of the Company, Bentinck decided to issue licenses to people who wish to carry out trade from Malwa to Bombay.

After the introduction of these reforms, the Company was able to make annual profit of ₹20,00,000.

### Social Reforms

It was not easy to tackle social problems of the Indian society as the social norms were related to the religion of the people. Many Governor Generals wanted to eliminate social evils but they did not do so as they did not want people to be discontented with the British. However, Bentinck was courageous enough to introduce some social reforms:

- **Abolition of Sati:** *Sati* means a chaste woman. As per this system, the women used to immolate themselves on the funeral pyre of their husbands. The system was based on the notion that when a person dies he needs company and other necessary things on his journey to paradise. This notion perhaps gave rise to the *sati* system.

Many princes and emperors tried to abolish this system. For instance, Emperor Akbar made a number of efforts to abolish this practice. The Marathas abolished this practice in their territories. The French and the Portuguese also took steps against this practice in Chander Nagar and Goa respectively.

The East India Company decided not to interfere in the social lives of the Indians. In spite of this fact, many Governor Generals took steps to restrict this practice. For instance, Lord Cornwallis, Lord Minto and

Lord Hastings made efforts to restrict the *sati* practice. They tried to forbid the burning of women who were below sixteen years of age. They made the presence of a police official mandatory during the funeral ceremony to ensure that a woman was not forced to immolate herself. However, these Governor Generals were successful in abolishing this practice.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, a social reformer, lost his sister-in-law due to this practice. After this, he condemned this practice by publishing a number of pamphlets and made a number of efforts to restrict this practice. However, he could not do this alone. Thus, during the Governor Generalship of William Bentinck, he requested Bentinck to declare this practice illegal. On this request, he examined a number of figures and facts about *sati* practice, took opinions of judges of the *Nizamat Adalat* and military personnel, and held discussions with the Superintendent of police. When he was sure that there was no danger of disorder in the law and order situation of the country, he enacted a law by which *sati* practice was made illegal.

After the enactment of this law, a few Bengali people appealed the Privy Council to take action against the passing of the law. However, the number of people who were happy with the enactment of law was more, thus, the law was not declared void. This helped in the abolition of this practice.

- **Suppression of female infanticides:** In some sections of the society, it was a custom to kill daughters as soon as they took birth. The higher section of the Rajput society considered it a humiliation to be called father-in-law, thus, they used to kill their infant daughters. William Bentinck passed an Act by which this practice was made illegal. As per the Act, the female infanticide was equivalent to murders. Thus, the person who was found guilty of this act was sentenced to death.
- **Stopping of human sacrifices:** In some tribes of India, it was a custom to sacrifice human beings to please gods and goddesses. The practice was based on the notion that people faced troubles, diseases and misfortunes when gods and goddesses were unhappy with them. Sacrificing human was considered a suitable method to please gods. William Bentinck stopped this practice as well.
- **Modification in the Hindu law of inheritance:** As per the Hindu law, a man used to lose his rights to his paternal property if he changed his religion. However, William Bentinck found this law faulty. Thus, he passed an Act according to a man could inherit his paternal property even after changing religion.

## NOTES

## NOTES

### Educational reforms

William Bentinck is also popular for introducing a number of reforms in the education system. During the Governor Generalship of Bentinck, the aim of education was defined. As per the Charter Act of 1813, one lakh rupees per year was allotted for the 'revival and promotion of knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories'.

After a number of long discussions, it was decided that English would be the medium of instruction in India. Many Indians also favoured the decision of the Government. The British wanted English to be the medium so that they could get inexpensive clerks and demand for English goods could also be increased.

After this Charter, English became the official language of India in many branches of administration. Introduction of English helped Indians in many ways. It made Indians aware of the western knowledge, ideas and science.

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### 5.5 LORD DALHOUSIE: DOCTRINE OF LAPSE

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The youngest Governor General of British India was Lord Dalhousie. He is best known for annexing regional Indian states into the British Raj in India on the basis of superfluous reasons. His methods of annexing Indian States were as follows:

#### (a) Annexations by conquest

- 1. Punjab:** The Sikhs were defeated by the British in the First Sikh War but had not made Punjab part of the Empire. Even after the defeat the Sikhs were strong and powerful. They were keen on taking revenge. Lord Dalhousie was part of the second war. After the war, Punjab became part of British Empire. Maharaja Dalip Singh sent to England on a pension. Under Sir John Lawrence as Chief Commissioner of the province, Sikhs became loyal to the British. After this, he made the settlement of the province.
- 2. Sikkim:** When the King of Sikkim arrested two British officers, Dalhousie attacked Sikkim and made it a part of the Empire.
- 3. Lower Burma.** After the defeat of Burma after the Burmese War in 1824, trade relations were established with Burma and it also became part of the Empire.

#### (b) Doctrine of Lapse

The rulers of Indian princely states had the right to adopt a child and make that child the successor. The British government agreed to this and made this right official by declaring, 'Every ruler, under Hindu laws, is free to nominate

his successor, real or adopted son. The Company's government is bound to accept this right'. In 1831, the Company declared, 'The Government may accept or reject, according to the situation, the application of Indian rulers to nominate his adopted son as his heir.'

The policy of the British administration was not clear. At times it rejected such an application at times it accepted. There was no real logic given behind such decisions. For example, it permitted Baijibai, the widow of Daulat Rao Sindhia, to nominate Jankoji, her adopted son, as the successor king in 1827. However, the Company rejected the claim of Ram Chandra Rao's adopted son at Jhansi in 1835.

Lord Dalhousie made three distinct categories for Indian States:

1. British Charter created states: If there was no biological heir then the British Empire would annex the state.
2. Subordinate States: Permission of the East India Company was needed to validate the heir in case of adoption.
3. Independent States: These had the freedom to appoint any heir as they chose.

The first policy was called the Doctrine of Lapse. Satara was the first State to which this policy was applied in 1848. Appa Sahib, the king of this state, did not have any child and before his death he had adopted a son. Other states to which this policy was applied were Jaipur, Sambhalpur, Baghat, Udaipur, Jhansi and Nagpur.

The queen of Jhansi, Rani Laxmi Bai stood up for her right and fought the British. But when her struggle was not successful she rebelled against the Empire in the revolt of 1857.

Dalhousie also annexed the state of Karoli and did not accept the adopted son as heir. But this decision was overruled by the court. The rules of annexure between the second and third category were not clear. Even though many of the states so annexed were under the control of the Mughals, they had no power to decide the legality of the heir, as the East India Company by then had become very powerful. And on the pretext of some excuse or the other, the states were annexed.

This arbitrary rule of annexure became one of the reasons for the Revolt of 1857 and all united to stand up against the British. Lord Canning another Governor General, later legalized adoption.

## Reforms

Lord Dalhousie also brought about many reforms.

- (a) **Social Reforms:** He enacted the Widow Remarriage Act. And also amended the conversion laws of Hindus which made it possible for Hindus who converted into other religion to inherit. Even though this

## NOTES



## NOTES

could have led to opposition from orthodox Hindus, it was a bold step on his part.

**(b) Administrative and Military Reforms:** He revamped the working of the administration and made different departments for different jobs and got rid of old systems. He appointed a separate Lieutenant Governor for Bengal. A separate District Magistrate was appointed for each district and given greater powers. He introduced Non Regulation System in newly conquered territories. In newly annexed states of Punjab and Pegu in Burma he made many new administrative changes which were appreciated widely. By appointing a Chief Commissioner with civil and military powers the efficiency of the Government improved. This system was introduced in Punjab, Central Provinces, Oudh and Burma. The Commissioner reported directly to the Governor General and Simla became the summer capital of India.

The policies helped expand the British Empire. This enabled to take strategic steps regarding deploying of troops. Thus the headquarters of the Bengal Artillery were shifted from Calcutta to Meerut. Simla became the permanent headquarters of the army.

**(c) Commercial Reforms:** Lord Dalhousie advocated free trade policy which immensely benefitted the British.

**(d) Establishment of Public Works Department:** The public works department that he set up made roads, bridges and canals. The Grand Trunk Road and a road from Dhaka to Arakan made it possible for army movement from Bengal to Burma. He modernized the postal and telegraph system in India. He was the one who introduced a uniform postage stamp for all over India. Through irrigation canals and steamer services on major water ways like Hooghly, Indus and Irravaddy also improved and so did other means of communication.

**(e) Educational Reforms:** Many reforms were also made in the field of education, one of them being the introduction of the Indian Civil Services Examination. In 1853 Sir Charles Wood sent out a policy document on education. This was known as the Woods Dispatch.

- Regional language was to be taught in the Anglo-Vernacular Schools
- Universities were set up in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras
- Colleges offering degrees were affiliated to the Universities
- Education was made secular in nature
- Each province set up an education department
- Teacher's Training Institutions were to be set up
- Privatization of education was encouraged and Government aid was given



- A Director General of Education was recommended for the whole of India

**(f) Post, Railways, and Telegraph:** A lot of attention was paid to this area as the defence and law and order of the country depended on this. Through this he encouraged British enterprises to invest in India. Lord Dalhousie also promised all facilities to these companies. The railways changed the face of the country and brought people from all corners and regions together.

## NOTES

### Check Your Progress

3. What were Dalhousie's three distinct categories of Indian States?
4. List one social reform brought by Lord Dalhousie.

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## 5.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. The system of subsidiary alliance was introduced by Dupleix, the French governor by giving his army to Indian rulers on rent.
2. Lord Hastings was the Governor General of India from 1813 to 1826.
3. Lord Dalhousie made three distinct categories for Indian States:
  - British Charter created states: If there was no biological heir then the British Empire would annex the state.
  - Subordinate States: Permission of the East India Company was needed to validate the heir in case of adoption.
  - Independent States: These had the freedom to appoint any heir as they chose.
4. Dalhousie enacted the Widow Remarriage Act. And also amended the conversion laws of Hindus which made it possible for Hindus who converted into other religion to inherit.

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## 5.7 SUMMARY

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- Though the Subsidiary Alliance System was formed in the second half of the eighteenth century, yet the credit of this policy goes to Lord Wellesley as it developed from 1798 to 1805 when Lord Wellesley was the Governor General of India.
- With the help of the subsidiary alliance system, the Company maintained a large army at the expense of the Nawabs. They could use this army in annexing other territories or protect their own empire.

## NOTES

- Lord Hastings was the Governor General of India from 1813 to 1826. He followed the footsteps of Lord Wellesley.
- Lord Hastings made a lot of effort to improve the administrative system of India. In spite of the fact that he was preoccupied due to a number of wars, he was successful in making some reforms in the administrative system.
- Lord William Bentinck became Governor General of India in 1828. He took a number of steps to suppress sati system. In 1806, he was appointed as the Governor of Madras.
- William Bentinck did not interfere in the affairs of many of the Indian states. For instance, he did not interfere in the affairs of Jaipur even when the British resident, appointed in the state, was attacked during anarchical situation in the state.
- It was not easy to tackle social problems of the Indian society as the social norms were related to the religion of the people. Many Governor Generals wanted to eliminate social evils but they did not do so as they did not want people to be discontented with the British.
- The youngest Governor General of British India was Lord Dalhousie. He is best known for annexing regional Indian states into the British Raj in India on the basis of superfluous reasons.
- The rulers of Indian princely states had the right to adopt a child and make that child the successor. The British government agreed to this and made this right official by declaring, 'Every ruler, under Hindu laws, is free to nominate his successor, real or adopted son. The Company's government is bound to accept this right'. In 1831, the Company declared, 'The Government may accept or reject, according to the situation, the application of Indian rulers to nominate his adopted son as his heir.'

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## 5.8 KEY WORDS

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- **Subsidiary Alliance:** It refers to a tributary alliance between a Native state and either French India, or later the British East India Company in which an Indian ruler entering into a subsidiary alliance with the British had to accept British forces in his territory and also agreed to pay for their maintenance.
- **Sati:** It refers to a former practice in India whereby a widow threw herself on to her husband's funeral pyre.
- **Female Infanticide:** It refers to the deliberate killing of new-born female children.

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## 5.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short Answer Questions

1. Write a short-note on the doctrine of lapse.
2. Why was Lord William Bentinck removed as Governor General?
3. Discuss the educational reforms introduced by William Bentinck.

### Long Answer Questions

1. Describe the reforms introduced by Lord Warren Hastings.
2. Discuss the features of the subsidiary alliance. What were its advantages to the company?
3. Examine the reforms introduced by Lord Dalhousie.

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## 5.10 FURTHER READINGS

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### NOTES

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## UNIT 6 REVOLT OF 1857 AND THE EMERGENCE OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

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### Structure

- 6.0 Introduction
- 6.1 Objectives
- 6.2 The Revolt of 1857: Causes and Results
- 6.3 The First Phase of Freedom Struggle
  - 6.3.1 Formation of Political Associations (Upto 1885)
- 6.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 6.5 Summary
- 6.6 Key Words
- 6.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 6.8 Further Readings

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### 6.0 INTRODUCTION

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The Revolt of 1857 began as a mutiny of sepoys of the East India Company's army on 10 May 1857, in the town of Meerut, and soon escalated into other mutinies and civilian rebellions largely in the upper Gangetic plain and central India, with the major hostilities confined to the present states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, northern Madhya Pradesh, and the Delhi region. The rebellion posed a considerable threat to Company power in that region, and was contained only with the fall of Gwalior on 20 June 1858. The rebellion is also known as India's First War of Independence, the Great Rebellion, the Indian Mutiny, the Revolt of 1857, the Uprising of 1857, the Sepoy Rebellion and the Sepoy Mutiny. The Mutiny was a result of various grievances. However the flashpoint was reached when the soldiers were asked to bite off the paper cartridges for their rifles which they believed were greased with animal fat, namely beef and pork. This was considered to be sacrilegious and went against the religious sentiments of Hindus and Muslims respectively.

Other regions such as Bengal, the Bombay Presidency, and the Madras Presidency remained largely calm. In Punjab, the Sikh princes backed the Company by providing soldiers and support. The large princely states of Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore, and Kashmir, as well as the smaller ones of Rajputana, did not join the rebellion. In some regions, such as Oudh, the rebellion took on the attributes of a patriotic revolt against European presence. Maratha leaders, such as Lakshmibai, the Rani of Jhansi, became folk heroes in the nationalist movement in India half a century later; however, they themselves generated no coherent ideology for a new order. The rebellion led

to the dissolution of the East India Company in 1858. It also led the British to reorganize the army, the financial system and the administration in India. The country was thereafter directly governed by the crown as the new British Raj.

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## 6.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit you will be able to:

- Examine the Causes and Impact of the Revolt of 1857
- Discuss the Emergence of Nationalism in India

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## 6.2 THE REVOLT OF 1857: CAUSES AND RESULTS

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In 1857, the British completed hundred years of stay in India since the Battle of Plassey. During this time the Indian rulers were unhappy for the loss of former glory and the peasants were discontent at having been reduced to serfs. The traditional craftsmen and artisans were robbed of their livelihoods. And now the colonial powers had all control over trade, commerce, and industries. This was leading to a steady outflow of India's wealth. This period saw a lot of aggressiveness from the British government in consolidating the princely states and strengthening the power of the Colonial rulers.

Dalhousie was responsible for the rising discontent among native states. Lord Canning, who succeeded him shortly before the revolt, could read the writing on the wall and said grimly, 'we must not forget that in the sky of India, serene as it is, a small cloud may arise, at first no bigger than a man's hand, but which, growing larger and larger, may at last threaten to burst and overwhelm us with ruin'.

### Causes of the Revolt of 1857

The following are the causes of the Revolt of 1857.

#### 1. Political Causes

One of the main causes of the Revolt was the Doctrine of Lapse. The arbitrary ways in which adopted sons were not allowed to succeed led to much resentment. The states which were affected were Satara (1848), Jaitpur, Sambhalpur (1849), Baghat (1850), Udepur (1852) Jhansi (1853) and Nagpur (1854). The annexation that caused the most controversy was that of Awadh in 1856. Even though the Nawab of Awadh, Wajid Ali Shah was loyal to the British he was accused of mis-governance. The company's soldiers were now upset as they were loyal to the Nawab and the annexation of Awadh meant that the soldiers and their relatives would have to pay higher taxes. A new land revenue act was introduced and this meant higher taxes for the landowners. The Zamindars also were against their lands being confiscated.

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## NOTES

The company also stopped the annual pension of Nana Sahib, the adopted son of last Peshwa Baji Rao II. He proved to be a deadly enemy of the British.

There was unemployment also because the people who did not know English lost their jobs since now Persian and Urdu were no longer acceptable in government jobs. These people were called Ashrafs and held posts in the judicial and revenue department and they joined the revolt as they wanted to get back their jobs and prestige.

### **2. Military Causes**

The soldiers or sepoy of the British Army revolted mainly because the cartridges used in the guns were coated with grease made from cow and pig fat. Soldiers who belonged to the upper caste among Hindus protested for the cow fat and the Muslims for the pig fat. Earlier also many sepoy had shown resentment over having to cross the sea to go to Burma as that was considered against some Hindu ritual. They were also unhappy with the pay structure as some high ranking Hindu soldier would get less than a low ranking English soldier. There were bleak chances of getting promoted also. Many spend all their service life in the same post. Then there were rumours of sepoy being forcibly converted to Christianity.

### **3. Religious Causes**

The large number of conversion being made by Christian missionaries were also cause of concern for the majority of Hindus and Muslims. There were news of humiliation by British on Hinduism and Islam. The efforts of some reformists were also seen as conspiracy against Hindu religion and interference in the internal matters of Hindus. Then a law was enacted in 1850, which also enabled those who converted into Christianity to inherit ancestral property. This was really opposed by the majority.

### **4. Administrative and Economic Causes**

The complete monopoly of the British on trade and commerce of the country also led to a lot of resentment. The native trade, handicraft, and other livelihoods were being destroyed by the monopoly of the British traders. The revenue system was also breaking the back bone of the local economy. With the annexation of Indian states consumers for local Indian goods and industry was not patronized and British goods were promoted and this led to large scale unemployment. And all these people also joined the revolt.

### **Nature of the Revolt**

The real nature and cause of the revolt is debatable. Each historian has his own interpretation. The most well-known and acceptable one being the story of Mangal Pandey, a sepoy of 34th native infantry of Bengal Army. When he fired at a Sergeant Major at Barrackpore on March 29, 1857 (Bengal), he

did not realize that he was creating history. He was later executed but this led to wide spread revolts in Meerut where soldiers killed English officers and started marching towards Delhi.

Many historians like Ear Stanley, T.R Homes. Forest, Innes and Sir John Lawrence stated the greased cartridges as the cause of the mutiny and called it a barbaric act. Some like Sir James Outram and W. Taylor described it as a conspiracy by Hindus and Muslims. Some called it a national revolt.'

Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan, described it as a resentment for not having political organization in his book *Asbab-i-Baghawat-i-Hind* (causes of the revolt of India). V.D. Savarkar in his book *War of Indian Independence* called it the first war of independence. Even though the revolt began in the army it soon spread to other areas as well. Some historians were of the view that this sowed the seeds of the cry for independence. Yet, there are the following contrarian views:

### **Events of the Revolt**

From Meerut the Sepoys marched to Delhi and declared Bahadur Shah Zafar as the Emperor of India. Then they attacked Daryaganj near Chandni Chowk area. Here large number of English lived. Soon Delhi was a battle ground. In Delhi the leaders failed to lead well and soon the battle in Delhi was losing ground.

The revolt spread to different parts of the country after the outbreak in Delhi. Kanpur, Bareilly, Lucknow, Allahabad, Banaras, Faizabad, Jhansi, Jagdishpur (Arrah), Danapur and Patna were raging. In Lucknow, the revolt was led by Begum Hazrat Mahal who declared Birjis Qadar, her son, as the Nawab of Awadh. The British Resident Henry Lawrence was killed. Sir Colin Campbell tried to save the Europeans with the help of the Gorkha regiment.

From Kanpur, Nana Saheb with the support of Taty Tope led the movement. Sir Hugh Wheeler, the commander of garrison surrendered on June 27, 1857. When Sir Campbell captured Kanpur, Tantia Tope escaped and joined Rani Laxmibai.

Rani Laxmibai, the ruler of Jhansi was a victim of the Doctrine of Lapse and revolted since her adopted son was not allowed to ascend to the throne and her state was being annexed by the British. She was declared ruler of Jhansi by the soldiers. Taty Tope and Rani Jhansi together attacked Gwalior.

The Indian soldiers were with them but the ruler of Gwalior, Scindia, was loyal to the British. He escaped to Agra. Gwalior fell in June 1858. Rani died fighting on June 17, 1858. Tope was arrested and executed. At Jagdishpur (Bihar) Kunwar Singh led the revolt and defeated the British forces near Arrah.

At Bareilly, Khan Bahadur Khan led the revolt and in Faizabad, it was led by Maulvi Ahmadullah and in Patna by Maulvi Pir Ali. They were also part of the Wahabi movement and were against British so they joined the revolt.

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### **Suppression of the Revolt**

#### **1. Delhi**

It was recaptured by General John Nicholson in September, 1857. However, he later died of his wounds. Lt. Hodson killed the Mughal Emperor's sons and a grandson. Bahadurshah was later sent to Burma on exile.

#### **2. Kanpur**

Sir Hugh Wheeler fought against Nana's forces. Many Englishmen, women and children were killed. Major General Havelock on 17th July defeated Nana and recaptured Kanpur after a tough battle. Many Indian were killed by Brigadier General Neill. After this Sir Colin Campbell he became the new commander in chief of the Indian Army in August 1857.

#### **3. Lucknow**

Death of Sir Henry Lawrence on 2nd July 1857; arrival of Havelock, Outram and Neill with reinforcements (25th September) and death of Neill; relief of the besieged British by Sir Colin Campbell on 17th November, death of Havelock in December 1857, and its occupation by Tope; its final reoccupation by Campbell on 21st March, 1858.

#### **4. Jhansi and Gwalior**

Jhansi's recaptured by Sir Hugh Rose on 4th April, 1858 and the escape of Rani Laxmibai; capture of Gwalior (whose soldiers revolted and drove out their ruler, Scindia) by Rani, death of Rani on 17th June, 1858 and recapture of Gwalior by Rose on 20th June.

#### **5. Bareilly**

Recaptured by Campbell on 5th May 1858.

#### **6. Arrah**

Suppression of the Bihar movement under Kunwar Singh by William Taylor and Vincent Eyre temporarily in August, 1857; escape of Kunwar to Awadh and his return to Bihar in April, 1858, to fight his last battle (he died on 9th May).

#### **7. Banaras and Allahabad**

Recaptured by Neill in June 1857.

#### **8. Central India**

The whole of central India and Bundelkhand was brought under British control by Sir Hugh Rose in the first half of 1858. But Tope, after losing Gwalior, escaped to Central India and carried on guerrilla war for 10 months.

Finally, he was betrayed by Man Singh (a feudatory of Scindia) and was executed by the British on 18th April 1859. Nana Saheb , Begum of Awadh and Khan Bahadur escaped to Nepal in December 1858 and died there. Bakht Khan went to Awadh after the fall of Delhi, and died fighting the British on 13th May, 1859. Maulavi Ahmadullah was treacherously murdered by Raja of Puwain in June 1858.

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### **Causes of the Failure of the Revolt**

The main reasons why the revolt failed were as follows:

1. The revolt was not a national event and hence failed to leave an impact. The revolt had no effect on the southern states of India. The sepoy of Madras were loyal to the British Sepoys of Punjab, Sindh, Rajputana and east Bengal did not join the mutiny and the Gorkhas were loyal allies of the British.
2. The British had very talented officers to lead the counter attack, some of them being Nicholson, Outram, Edwards etc.
3. Only the rulers who had lost their throne and state joined the revolt. Many remained loyal. Sir Dinkar Rao of Gwalior and Salar Jung of Nizam did not support the rebellion in fact they suppressed it. The British remained grateful to the Nizams for a long time for this.
4. The battle was lopsided towards the British as they had more resources.
5. Lack of leadership and proper strategies led to the failure of the revolt. There was no proper coordination. Bahadur Shah Zafar was a coward and was concerned about his own safety. He proved to be the weakest link. There was no faith in him.
6. There was no larger vision or goal for the revolt. It was led by feudal lords who did not have any game plan but to secure their own selfish interests. They hardly had anything new to challenge the mighty British rule.
7. Since the survival of the Zamindars and moneylenders depended on the British economy, they did not support the revolt.
8. The educated middle class was not part of the revolt. The number of such people was small and they had not much say. And many of them were for British rule as they saw it as a means for the country's modernization.

### **Impact of the Revolt**

The base of the company's hold on India was shaken by the Revolt of 1857. Thereafter a stronger mechanism and administrative policy was placed in order to strengthen the British rule in India. The reactionary and vested interests were well protected and encouraged and became pillars of British rule

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in India. Since then the British adopted the divide and rule policy to weaken the back bone of India. Key positions in civil and military administration were now in the control of the British.

The various effects of the Revolt of 1857 may be summarized as follows:

- The revolt of 1857 marked the end of British imperialism. A new policy was passed by the Queen of England which announced that the Indian States would no longer be annexed. The Nizam, Rajput, Maratha and Sikh Chiefs were applauded for their loyalty and rewarded by certificates and *Sanad*.
- The number of Europeans in the Army was increased from 40,000 to 65,000 and that of Indian soldiers was reduced to 1.4 lakhs from 2.38 lakhs. The ratio of Indian to English soldiers in the Bengal army was made 1:2 and in Madras to 1:3.
- After the Revolt of 1857, the British pursued the policy of divide and rule.
- The Doctrine of Lapse was withdrawn.
- In August 1858, the British Parliament passed an Act, which put an end to the rule of the Company. The control of the British government in India was transferred to the British Crown. A 15-member council of India headed by Secretary of State for India was formed. The Secretary of State was made responsible for the Government of India.
- The British Governor-General of India was now also given the title of Viceroy, who was also the representative of the Monarch.
- Total expense of the suppression of the Revolt was borne by Indians.
- The Revolt of 1857 led to the rapid growth of nationalism among the literate Indians. The formation of various political associations, such as the East India Association (1866), Poona Sarvajanik Sabha (1867), Indian League (1875), Indian Association (1876), Madras Mahajan Sabha (1884) and Bombay Presidency Association (1885), and finally the Indian National Congress (1885) was the result of growing national consciousness.
- The Revolt of 1857 saw for the first time unity among Hindus and Muslims. So in that sense it was a historic movement.

### **Government of India Act, 1858**

The presence of the British in India can be divided into two phases. One phase was between 1772 and 1858, during which the East India Company traded with help from British army and the second phase was from 1858 to 1947, when the British Crown ruled.

Till the revolt the Charter Act of 1853 allowed the East India Company to rule India. After the Revolt of 1857 the British Empire ended the company's rule and proclaimed India to be part of the British crown. The East India Company was held responsible for the revolt. Even though the company tried to show how it had been of great service to the Empire, the Empire did not pay heed.

The British Empire was convinced that rule of the company had to go and hence, Lord Palmerston, the British Prime Minister, introduced the Bill for Better Government of India, in February 1858. In an addressing to the House of Commons, he said, 'the principle of our political system is that all administrative functions should be accompanied by ministerial responsibility to parliament but in this case the chief function in the government of India are committed to a body not responsible to parliament, not appointed by the crown, but elected by persons who have no more connection with India than consists in the simple possession of so much India Stock'.

After pointing out the drawbacks of the company and showing how this was leading to more confusion convinced the crown of its defects and the Parliament passed the Bill for a Better Government of India on August 1858.

### **Provisions**

1. The rule of the East India Company was stopped by the Government of India Act of 1858 and the British parliament became responsible for all matters regarding India. A Viceroy was appointed as the representative of British Empire in India. Army and land erstwhile held by the company became part of the British Crown.
2. A council of 15 members was formed and the powers of the Court Director and the Board of Control were handed over to the Secretary of State for India. The task of administration and control was invested in the Secretary of State. He was also allowed to sit in the parliament. Out of the 15 members of the council the British crown appointed 8 and the Court Directors appointed 7. It was mandatory that at least 9 members of the council must have served in India for not less than three years and they must not have been away from India for more than ten years at the time of their appointment. The members got £1200 per annum from India's exchequer.
3. The secretary of the state had powers to take decisions in the following areas and also the following duties like:
  - (i) He had the power of veto against the decision of council.
  - (ii) He had also the power of casting vote.
  - (iii) He had to honour the decision of council in the matters of revenue, appointments, purchase, mortgage and sale of properties of the Government of India.

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(iv) He was permitted to write secretly to the Viceroy without informing the council.

(v) He had the power to make new rules for Indian Civil Services in which now Indians were allowed.

4. The British Crown had the power to appoint the Viceroy and Governor-General and governors of Bombay and Madras Presidencies. And the Viceroy had the power to appoint the Lieutenant Governor with the permission of the British Government.

5. It was the task of the secretary of state to make reports on Revenue, Law, Railways and Construction before the House of Commons, the lower house of British Parliament. The permission of the Parliament was needed to use the revenue for military expeditions outside India. The secretary of state was answerable to the British Parliament and the parliament had the right to remove him.

Lord Canning announced Queen Victoria's proclamation on 1st November 1858, at Allahabad. This proclamation used the term Viceroy for the first time. The proclamation also assured that no more annexation would be done of states, no one would be converted to Christianity and proper qualifications were laid out for employment to the government jobs. It was assured that laws enacted would take into account Indian traditions and culture. The ownership of properties and succession would be protected. The peasants were also promised rights on proper payment of taxes.

### Check Your Progress

1. List one main political cause of the Revolt of 1857.
2. Why did the soldiers or sepoys of the British Army revolt?

## 6.3 THE FIRST PHASE OF FREEDOM STRUGGLE

The first phase of the Indian freedom struggle can be thought to have begun with the germination of nationalist thought among the Indian people. There is no specific date or decade to signify the origin of Indian nationalism. However, one can identify several important points and events that were conducive to the rise of nationalist consciousness in the nineteenth century culminating in the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Major causes associated with the rise of the nationalist movement in India were as follows:

- 1. Administrative unification of India:** Nationalism was fuelled by the colonial rule. The British imperialism was the most significant

factor which added to the rise of nationalism in India. It made the geographical amalgamation of the country conceivable. It brought about a semblance of political unification of the country which made the Indian people consider themselves as one nation. The British brought about a uniformity of law and administration throughout the country.

- 2. Impact of the Western civilization:** The British conquest of India led to rapid associations with the Western world. Consequently, the acquaintances with the European countries influenced the Indians enormously. The nineteenth century in Europe was the century of nationalism and liberalism. Indians absorbed the ideas of nationalism and liberalism from the Western countries particularly from Greece, Italy, Germany and Belgium. Western thinkers namely Rousseau, Spencer, Bentham, Macaulay, Burke, Mill, and Voltaire also motivated and encouraged the ideas of freedom among the Indians. Thus, there was a development of political awareness and awakening among the Indians. The American Revolution, the French Revolution and other revolutions in Europe also inspired the Indian masses with new ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. Nationalism and patriotism inspired Indians to fight against oppression and exploitation of several centuries
- 3. Escalation of English language:** The emphasis on English education in India increased rapidly after the rebellion of 1857. The second half of the nineteenth century was the age of Liberalism in England. The study of the dogmatic classics of English fiction from Milton to Mill embedded the seed of liberalism in the minds of English-educated Indians. Liberalism included two characteristics—nationalism and democracy. Thus with the spread of English education, the educated Indians increasingly became politically conscious. The Britishers introduced the English language in India in order to fulfil their own vested interests. They introduced English as they required Indian clerks educated in English in order to reinforce their rule in India. English education also aided people of different provinces to come close to one another. Thus it helped in nurturing the national feelings and political consciousness among Indians.
- 4. Increased use of means of communication:** The introduction of telegraphs and railways in 1852 and 1853 respectively gave India rapid means of transport and communication. The modern means of communication increased connectivity among Indian villages and the people from isolated regions had the chance of coming closer to each other. Networks of communication endorsed trade and commerce and helped populaces of diverse regions to improve social and intellectual interaction. The new social and economic associations helped them access information regarding social affairs and created awareness among them regarding their social incapacities.

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- 5. Influence of cultural heritage:** Several academicians and religious reformers played their roles in advancing the cause of development of the nationalist movement in the country. They emphasized the past grandeur and the rich legacy of India. The study and publication of the early Indian literature by the Asiatic Society of Bengal and the scholars such as Max Muller, Colebrooke, Monier Williams, Hari Prasad Shastri, Ranade, R.G. Bhandarkar, Rajendra Lai Mittra, etc., showed the magnificence of Sanskrit language to the people of India. Their writings also indoctrinated a sense of pride in past and faith in the future among them. They also praised great emperors like Chandragupta, Ashoka and Akbar in their writings.
- 6. Role of social and religious reformers:** Religious and social reformers, such as, Raja Rammohan Roy, Debendranath Tagore, Keshab Chandra Sen, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Vivekananda, and others left a remarkable influence on the people of India. They were also responsible for stimulating the countrymen to treasure the epitomes of freedom and liberty.
- 7. Development of Indian press and literature:** The printing press played a major role in the rise of nationalist consciousness by helping people to form a public opinion. Newspapers like *The Bombay Samachar*, *The Kesari*, *The Amrit Bazar Patrika*, *Indian Mirror*, *The Hindu Patriot*, *The Hindu*, *The Bengalee*, etc., immensely swayed the people of India and thus left a permanent mark on the political life of the country. The works of Hem Chandra Banerjee, R.C. Dutta, Din Bandhu Mitra, Navin Chandra Sen, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, and Rabindra Nath Tagore also affected the minds of the people. The *Anand Math* of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee has rightly been observed as the Bible of modern Bengali nationalism. Thus the literature of the patriots and intellectuals brought about a rebellion in the minds of the Indians. These radical minds were accountable for the growth of Indian nationalism.
- 8. Economic exploitation:** The primary objective of the British rule in India was economic exploitation. They took away raw materials from India and brought manufactured goods. The policy of economic exploitation ruined the Indian industries. Britishers' free trade policy proved disastrous for Indian trade and industries. Indian industries failed to compete in the international market because they were deprived of the advantages and privileges that British industries had. Moreover, the economic system of India was moulded according to the needs of the people of England. Thus the interests of the Indian people were completely ignored and the relationship between the Indians and the Britishers strained further.
- 9. Discrimination against Indians in the recruitment to government services:** Indians faced severe discrimination during the British rule



as far as the recruitment to government services were concerned. The proclamation of Queen Victoria in 1858 acknowledged that Indians, henceforth, would be selected to high posts on the basis of their excellence regardless of their caste, religion, or race. But this policy was not properly executed. The unfair policies of British government created a widespread discontentment among the educated people of India.

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**10. Events during the reign of Lord Lytton:** The period from 1870 to 1884 was extremely tumultuous and witnessed the commencement of Indian nationalism. The unfair policies and directives during the reign of Lord Lytton strengthened the nationalist movement. He conducted his famous *Delhi Darbar* in 1877, at the time when people of South India were suffering from the effects of a major famine. There was widespread discontentment among the Indian people when the British government removed import duties on British textile imports in order to please the textile manufacturers of England. Indians considered the action as an evidence of the British aspirations to deteriorate growing textile industry of India. The second Afghan War had a devastating effect on the Indian economy. Furthermore, Lytton passed the Vernacular Press Act in 1878 so as to suppress the growing national consciousness among the Indian people. People from all sections of society condemned the discriminatory provisions of the Act. It has been pointed out that the Act was a regressive and impractical measure detrimental to the future progress of India. At the same time in 1878, the government announced new guidelines decreasing the maximum age limit for sitting in the Indian Civil Service Examination from 21 years to 19. All these measures created extensive discontentment among the Indians.

**11. Ilbert Bill Argument:** During the viceroyalty of Lord Ripon in British India, a controversy arose concerning the Ilbert Bill. Ripon tried to pass a law called Ilbert Bill which would provide Indian district magistrates and sessions judges the jurisdiction to try British offenders in criminal cases at the district level. However, the bill faced extreme opposition in Britain as well as by the British settlers in India. Consequently, government had to amend the bill. This increased dissatisfaction among Indians who were now subjugated to the authority of British people.

### 6.3.1 Formation of Political Associations (upto 1885)

The British domination gave rise to some forces, which ultimately challenged the British imperialism. For instance, the British forced English as medium of instruction in the education system of India, this went against the British as Indians came across the ideas of nationalism, political rights and democracy. These ideas resulted in a number of political associations, which were not known to Indians like then.

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Many political associations were formed after 1836. In 1866, Dadabhai Naoroji organized the East-India Association in London. The objective of this association was to influence British 'to promote Indian welfare'. After some time, he opened its branches in various cities of India.

### Political associations in Bengal

Raja Rammohan Roy was the first Indian leader to start socio-political reform movements in India. He was greatly influenced by Western ideas. He supported a number of popular movements all over the world. In 1821, when constitutional government was established in Spain, Rammohan Roy celebrated the event in Calcutta.

Rammohan Roy demanded liberty of the Press, appointment of Indians in civil courts and other higher posts, codification of law etc. The task of organizing political associations was left to the associates of Rammohan Roy.

- (i) **Bangabhasha Prakasika Sabha:** The first such association called 'Bangabhasha Prakasika Sabha' was formed in 1836. The association discussed various topics related to the policy and administration of the Government. It also sought redressal by sending petitions to the Government.
- (ii) **Zamindari Association:** Formed in July 1837, it was more popularly known as the Landholders' Society. It was founded with an objective to safeguard the interests of the landlords in Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. Although limited in its objectives, the Landholders' Society marks the beginning of an organized political activity. It used the methods of constitutional agitation for the redressal of grievances. The Landholders' Society of Calcutta cooperated with the British India Society, which was founded by Mr. Adams in London in the year 1839. The association functioned till 1844.
- (iii) **Bengal British India Society:** This society was formed in April 1843. The objective of this society was the 'collection and dissemination of information relating to the actual condition of the people of British India...and to employ such other means of peaceful and lawful character as may appear calculated to secure the welfare, extend the just rights, and advance the interests of all classes of our fellow subjects.' This organization merged with Zamindari Association in 1851 and formed the British Indian Association.
- (iv) **British Indian Association:** Due to the failure of the Landholder's Society and the Bengal British India Society, the two associations were merged on 29 October 1851 to form a new British Indian Association. This association was dominated by members of the landed aristocracy and the primary objective of this association

was to safeguard the interests of this class. However, the association followed a liberal approach and when the time came for the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company, it sent a petition to the Parliament in 1852. In this petition, it appealed for the establishment of a separate legislature of a popular character, separation of judicial from executive functions, reduction in the salaries of higher officers, abolition of salt duty, abkari and stamp duties. The appeals of the association were partially met and the Charter Act of 1853 provided for the addition of six members to the Governor-General's Council for legislative purposes. The British Indian Association continued its existence as a political body till 20th century even though it was over-shadowed by Indian National Congress.

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- (v) **India League:** Babu Sisir Kumar Ghose founded this association in September 1875. The objective of this association was 'stimulating the sense of nationalism amongst the people'. This association also aimed at promoting political education.
- (vi) **Indian Association:** Within a year, the India League was superseded by the Indian Association. It was founded by Ananda Mohan Bose and Surendranath Banerjee on 26 July 1876. The Indian Association hoped to attract not only 'the middle classes' but also the masses, and therefore, it kept its annual subscription at ₹5 as opposed to the subscription of ₹50 p.a. fixed by the British Indian Association. Soon, the Indian Association became 'the centre of the leading representatives of the educated community of Bengal.' The Indian Association merged with the National Congress in December 1886.

Lytton's unpopular measures whipped up political activity in India. A regulation of 1876 reduced the maximum age for appearing in the ICS Examination from 21 to 19 years. Since the examination was held only in London, young Indians had to face innumerable difficulties. The Indian Association took up this problem and organized an all-India agitation against it, which was popularly known as the Indian Civil Service Agitation.

### **Political associations in Bombay**

- (i) **Bombay Association:** Bombay Association was founded on the lines of the British India Association of Calcutta on 26 August 1852. The Bombay Association sent a petition to the British Parliament urging the formation of new legislative councils which should have Indian representative as well. The Association condemned the policy of exclusion of Indians from higher services, and lavish expenditure on sinecure posts given to Europeans. This association did not survive for long.

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- (ii) **Bombay Presidency Association:** Policies of Lytton and Ilbert Bill controversy caused political turmoil in Bombay. This led to the formation of Bombay Presidency Association in the year 1885. It was formed by the popularly called brothers-in-law: Mehta, Telang and Tyabji, representing the three chief communities of Bombay town.
- (iii) **Poona Sarvajanik Sabha:** This was established at Poona by Justice Ranade and others in the 1870s, with the objective to serve as a bridge between the Government and the people. The Bombay Presidency Association and the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha worked in close collaboration.

### Political associations in Madras

- (i) **Madras Native Association:** This was set up as a branch of British Indian Association, Calcutta on 26 February 1852. The Madras Native Association also sent petition to the Parliament on the eve of the passing of the Charter Act of 1853. It made demands similar to that of the British Indian Association and the Bombay Association. However, the Madras Native Association was not popular.
- (ii) **Madras Mahajana Sabha:** This was formed by M. Vijayraghavachari, G. Subramanya Iyer, Ananda Charlu, Rangayya Naidu and others on 16 May 1884. It was aimed at coordinating the activities of local associations and providing a focus for the non-official intelligence spreading through the Presidency. It held two popular conferences: one was from 29th December to 31st December 1884, and second on 1st and 2nd January 1885. It demanded expansion of legislative councils, representation of Indians in legislative councils, separation of judicial from revenue functions, etc.

### Check Your Progress

3. Mention any two causes associated with the rise of the nationalist movement in India.
4. State the motive of Ilbert Bill.
5. When was the Bombay Association founded?

## 6.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

1. One of the main causes of the Revolt was the Doctrine of Lapse.
2. The soldiers or sepoy of the British Army revolted mainly because the cartridges used in the guns were coated with grease made from cow and pig fat. Soldiers who belonged to the upper caste among Hindus protested for the cow fat and the Muslims for the pig fat.

3. The two causes associated with the rise of the nationalist movement in India are administrative unification of India and impact of the Western civilization.
4. Ilbert Bill aimed to provide Indian district magistrates and sessions judges the jurisdiction to try British offenders in criminal cases at the district level.
5. Bombay Association was founded on the lines of the British India Association of Calcutta on 26 August 1852.

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### 6.5 SUMMARY

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- In 1857, the British completed hundred years of stay in India since the Battle of Plassey. During this time the Indian rulers were unhappy for the loss of former glory and the peasants were discontent at having been reduced to serfs.
- One of the main causes of the Revolt was the Doctrine of Lapse. The arbitrary ways in which adopted sons were not allowed to succeed led to much resentment.
- The soldiers or sepoy of the British Army revolted mainly because the cartridges used in the guns were coated with grease made from cow and pig fat.
- The complete monopoly of the British on trade and commerce of the country also led to a lot of resentment.
- The revolt was not a national event and hence failed to leave an impact. The revolt had no effect on the southern states of India.
- The base of the company's hold on India was shaken by the Revolt of 1857. Thereafter a stronger mechanism and administrative policy was placed in order to strengthen the British rule in India.
- The presence of the British in India can be divided into two phases. One phase was between 1772 and 1858, during which the East India Company traded with help from British army and the second phase was from 1858 to 1947, when the British Crown ruled.
- Till the revolt the Charter Act of 1853 allowed the East India Company to rule India. After the Revolt of 1857 the British Empire ended the company's rule and proclaimed India to be part of the British crown.
- The first phase of the Indian freedom struggle can be thought to have begun with the germination of nationalist thought among the Indian people. There is no specific date or decade to signify the origin of Indian nationalism.

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- Nationalism was fuelled by the colonial rule. The British imperialism was the most significant factor which added to the rise of nationalism in India.
- The introduction of telegraphs and railways in 1852 and 1853 respectively gave India rapid means of transport and communication. The modern means of communication increased connectivity among Indian villages and the people from isolated regions had the chance of coming closer to each other.
- The period from 1870 to 1884 was extremely tumultuous and witnessed the commencement of Indian nationalism.

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### 6.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Serfs:** It refers to an agricultural labourer bound by the feudal system who was tied to working on his lord's estate.
- **Nationalism:** It is a political, social, and economic ideology and movement characterized by the promotion of the interests of a particular nation, especially with the aim of gaining and maintaining the nation's sovereignty (self-governance) over its homeland. .
- **Colonialism:** It refers to the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically.

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### 6.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short Answer Questions

1. Discuss the nature of the Revolt of 1857.
2. What was the Government of India Act, 1858?
3. How did the administrative unification of India fuel nationalism?

#### Long Answer Questions

1. Examine the causes of the Revolt of 1857.
2. Why did the Revolt of 1857 fail? What was the impact of the revolt?
3. Describe the causes associated with the rise of the nationalist movement in India.

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## 6.8 FURTHER READINGS

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**BLOCK - III**  
**THE FIRST PHASE OF INDIAN NATIONAL**  
**CONGRESS 1885 – 1919 AND SOME**  
**PERSONALITIES IN INDIA**

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**UNIT 7    FORMATION OF THE**  
**INDIAN NATIONAL**  
**CONGRESS**

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**Structure**

- 7.0 Introduction
- 7.1 Objectives
- 7.2 The Indian National Congress: Formation by Moderates
- 7.3 The Rise of the Extremists
  - 7.3.1 Factors that Led to the Rise of Extremism
  - 7.3.2 Objectives and Methods of Extremists
- 7.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 7.5 Summary
- 7.6 Key Words
- 7.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 7.8 Further Readings

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**7.0    INTRODUCTION**

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Decentralization of Mughal authority and the British Conquest resulted in the establishment of the British Raj with its three main presidencies managed by East India Company. The presidencies were Madras, Bombay and Calcutta and were directly answerable to the British. Through the conquest of the Indian subcontinent by the East India Company, the vast areas came directly under their rule through subsidiary alliances with the ruling heads of princely states. They collected taxes and generated their revenues through these dynasties. After the Revolt of 1857, the remaining dynasties came under the control of the colonial government ruled by the Viceroy and British Parliament.

However, each section of Indian society steadily discovered that their interests were suffering at the hands of the foreign rulers. British government confiscated a large portion of peasant's production as land revenue and protected the *Zamindars* and landlords who exploited peasants in diverse ways. Although, newly rising educated class could see that Britain was plummeting India to the status of an economic colony which could serve

as a source of raw materials for British industries, a market for British manufacturers, and a field for the security of British capital. Consequently, they began to realize that as long as imperialist control of the Indian economy continued, it would not develop progressively. The rising Indian capitalist class also developed a national political consciousness. The Indian capitalists therefore realized that there existed a contradiction between imperialism and their own independent growth and that only a national government would create conditions for the rapid development of Indian trade and industries.

The gradual rise of anti-imperialist movements was as a result of the intrinsic nature of foreign imperialism and its harmful impact on the lives of the Indians. These movements came to be recognized as national movements because they united people from different sections of the society. Around this time, many organizations were also being shaped which upraised their voices against British rule. Most of these organizations were regional in nature. Some of these organizations were very active such as Bengal Indian Association, Bengal Presidency Association, Pune Public Meeting, etc. However, it was felt that if these regional organizations could work unitedly, it would help the Indian masses to raise their voices against the British Rule. This led to the formation of Indian National Congress in the year 1885.

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### 7.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the formation of the Indian National Congress
- Discuss the reasons for the failure of the moderates
- Examine the reasons for the rise of the extremists

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### 7.2 THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS: FORMATION BY MODERATES

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The Indian National Congress was formed due to the efforts of a number of people. Presence of number of political associations across the country, and spread of the ideals of patriotism and nationalism prepared the foundation of the Indian National Congress. It was formed in the year 1885 but its origin is not known. According to Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, its origin is 'shrouded in mystery'. However, many people believe that A.O. Hume laid its foundation under Lord Dufferin. He formed the Indian National Congress to 'provide a 'safety-valve' to the anticipated or actual discontentment of the Indian intelligentsia and to form a quasi-constitutional party similar to Her Majesty's Opposition in England.' According to W.C. Banerjee, the First Congress President, the Indian National Congress was formed by Lord Dufferin, Viceroy of India. He also believed that Lord Dufferin formed it

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because he wanted a political organization which can understand the 'real wishes' of the people so that the British government could prevent political outbursts in the country.

On 1 March 1883, in an open letter, Hume had appealed to the students of Calcutta University to set up an organization in India. He officially clarified that his objective was 'to form a constitutional method to prevent the spread of dissatisfaction caused by western ideas, education, inventions, and machines and it was essential to take measures for the security and continuity of the British Government'. Some scholars believe that Ripon advised Hume to form an organization of educated Indians. Recently, some scholars analysed Dufferin's correspondence to Hume as well as the activities of the early nationalists, they concluded that the theory of 'safety valve' is a myth.

The Indian National Congress was founded on 28 December 1885 at Sir Tej Pal Sanskrit Vidyalaya, Bombay. It will not be correct to say that it was a sudden event rather it was as Bipan Chandra states, 'the culmination of a process of political awakening that had its beginnings in the 1860s and 1870s and took a major leap forward in the late 1870s and early 1880s'. Also, a lot of attempts were made by Indian Nationalists for the formation of a political organization on all-India scale. For instance, two National Conferences were organized by Indian Association.

A.O. Hume succeeded in forming an All India Party, which was attended by 72 delegates. Most of the Indian leaders could not attend this session as a National Conference was going on in Calcutta at the same time. The objectives of both these organizations were same. The Indian National Conference was later merged into the National Congress. It would be wrong to believe that he laid the foundation of the Indian National Congress single-handedly as many people were involved in its formation. Most of the leaders were able to accept Hume because they felt that he would not be biased towards any region or caste. It is because he did not belong to any of these groups and he had a sincere love for India.

Some of the members of the Indian National Congress were Pherozeshah Mehta, W.C. Banerji, Anandamohan Bose, Badruddin Tyabji, Surendranath Banerji, and Romesh Chandra Dutt. This association was different from others as none of the earlier associations had complete independence as their agenda. The Congress made some demands, which can be divided into three categories: political, administrative and economic.

### (i) Political demands

- Greater power to the Supreme Council and local Legislative Council
- Discussion on budget to be held by the council
- Representation of the council through local bodies like Universities and Chambers of Commerce

- Creation of Legislative Assembly in Punjab, Awadh (NWP) and North-West Frontier Province (NWFP)

### (ii) Economic demands

The Congress sessions, between 1855 and 1905, regularly passed resolutions for:

- Reduction in land revenue
- Establishment of agricultural banks
- Reduction in home charge and military expenditure
- Ending unfair tariffs and excise duties
- Enquiring the causes behind India's poverty and famines
- Providing more funds for technical education
- Development of Indian industries
- Better treatment for Indian coolies in foreign countries
- Change in forest laws so that tribal can use forest

### (iii) Administrative demands

- ICS examination in India as well as England
- Increase Indian volunteer force
- Understanding of Indian needs on the part of administration
- Separation of Judiciary from Executive power and extension of trial by jury
- Higher posts in the army for Indians

### Objectives of the Congress

The primary objective of the Congress was to make people feel that they belong to a single nation—India. The diversity in India in terms of caste, creed, religion, tradition, language made this a difficult task. However, it was not impossible. Many important people like Pherozshah Mehta, Dadabhai Naoroji, K.T. Telang and Dinshaw Wacha, attended the first session of the Indian National Congress. The objectives of the Congress laid down by W.C. Banerjee, the President of the first session of the Indian National Congress, are as follows:

- Promoting personal intimacy and friendship among people who are working for the cause of the country
- Eradicating prejudices related to race, creed and provinces through friendly interaction
- Consolidating the sentiments of national unity

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- Maintaining authoritative record of the educated Indians' views on the prominent issues of the day
- Determining methods by which native politicians can work towards public interest during the next twelve months
- Training and organizing public opinion
- Formulating and presenting popular demands before the government through petitions

The Congress was supported by people of all religions. W.C. Banerjee, the first President of the Indian National Congress, was an Indian Christian. The second President was Dadabhai Naoroji, who was a Parsee. The third President was Badruddin Tayabji who was a Muslim. The fourth and fifth Presidents were George Yule and William Baderburn who were Britishers.

### Early Nationalists and their Programmes

We have already seen that some of the educated Indians were playing major roles in cultivating a sense of nationalism. Some of the early nationalist, also known as the moderates, were the ones who set up the Indian national Congress. Here are some of the prominent names:

- 1. Allan Octavian Hume (1829-1912):** He was of Scottish descent. He joined the Bengal Civil Service in 1849 and made a lot of efforts to remove the social maladies of the country. His superiors did not favour him, thus, he had to retire in 1882. He took initiative to form the Indian National Congress in 1885. In 1889, he helped in setting up the British Committee of the Congress in London as well. This committee started its journal named 'India'.
- 2. Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917):** He was known as 'the Grand Old Man of India'. He was associated with the Indian National Congress right from its inception and became its president thrice: in 1886, 1893 and 1906. He was the first Indian to become a Member of the House of Commons on the Liberal Party's ticket. During his stay in England, from 1855 to 1869, he educated British public on Indian affairs through the London Indian Association and the East India Association. A book by Naoroji 'Poverty and Un-British Rule in India' was published in 1901. This book had statistics to prove that the drain of wealth from India to Great Britain was the cause of growing poverty in India.
- 3. Pherozeshah Mehta (1845-1915):** He was born in a middle class Parsi family of Bombay. He was one of the founders of the Bombay Presidency Association and the Indian National Congress. He was also a pioneer of the Swadeshi and founded the famous Bombay Chronicle in 1913.

- 4. Surendranath Banerjea (1848-1925):** He was an eminent leader who passed the ICS examination in 1871 and started his career as an Assistant Magistrate at Sylhet. A controversy with the Government led him to leave the job. He was the founder of the Indian Association in 1876. In 1883, he convened a National Conference which was the precursor of the Indian National Congress. He presided over the Congress sessions twice. He was elected the first President of the Indian National Liberal Federation in 1918 and in 1921, he became a minister in Bengal.
- 5. Badruddin Tyabji (1844-1906):** He was the first Indian barrister at Bombay High Court and was nominated to Bombay Legislative Council in 1882. He was one of the founders of the Bombay Presidency Association and the Indian National Congress. He was the President at the third Congress session in Madras in 1887. He helped Muslims in the causes of educational advancement and social reforms as the Secretary and then as the President of the Anjuman-i-Islam of Bombay. He strongly pleaded for the education of women.
- 6. Womesh Chander Banerjee (1844-1906):** He represented the Calcutta University in the Bengal Legislative Council. He was the first Congress President at Bombay in 1885. He left India in 1902 to settle in England to practise before the Privy Council. He financed the British Committee of the Congress in London and its journal 'India'.
- 7. Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946):** He was born and educated at Allahabad. He started his career as a lawyer and as an able Parliamentarian. He was a member of the Provincial and Central Legislatures for several terms. He promoted the use of indigenous products and helped in organizing the Indian Industrial Conference and the UP Industrial Association at Allahabad in 1907. In 1926, he organized his own Nationalist Party. He also established the Banaras Hindu University and for several years served as its Vice-Chancellor.
- 8. Tej Bahadur Saprū (1872-1949):** He was a conscientious and successful lawyer who specialized in constitutional law. He helped Mrs Besant to build up the Central Hindu College at Banaras and to establish the Banaras Hindu University in collaboration with Malaviya. He entered politics during the Home Rule movement and associated in drafting Nehru Committee Report of 1928. He participated in the Round Table conferences as well.
- 9. Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915):** He was a follower of Mahadev Govind Ranade who was popularly known as the Socrates of Maharashtra. He joined the Deccan Educational Society founded by Ranade. He edited the quarterly journal of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha. He played a great part, officially and unofficially, in the formulation of

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the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909. His principles attracted Gandhiji, who became Gokhale's pupil. In 1905, he laid the foundation of the 'Servants of India Society' for the training of national missionaries and to promote, by constitutional means, the true interests of the Indian people.

**10. Kashinath Trimbak Telang (1850-1893):** He was a co-founder of the Bombay Presidency Association. He was one of the leading men who founded the Congress and became its first 'hardworking secretary'. He was active in the sphere of social reforms and was the President of the National Social Conference. He rose to the position of a High Court Judge.

**11. Rashbehari Ghose (1845-1921):** After obtaining the Law degree, he enrolled himself as an advocate at the Calcutta High Court. He became a member of the Bengal Legislative Council in 1889. He was the Chairman, Reception Committee of the Congress, in its Calcutta session in 1906. He was also the President-elect for the Surat session of the Congress in 1907. He was deputed by the Congress to proceed with its delegation to England and forward its point of view before the British Government.

Since its inception in 1885 till the time India won its Independence in 1947, the Congress was the largest and most prominent Indian political organization. In its initial stages, the Indian National Congress was a political unit, however, in due course of time it supported the cause of social reform and human development. The Indian National Congress is said to have also provided impetus to the spirit of nationalism. In its early stages, there was unity in the Indian National Congress and it was marked by the learning of democratic methods and techniques. The leaders of the INC believed that the British government was responsive to their needs and were willing to make changes accordingly. However, over a period of time, the Indian masses became disillusioned with the concept of nationalism. They suddenly became aware that their petitions not as fruitful as expected and that the British subtly avoided taking any action. Even in the phase of dissatisfaction, there were some Congress leaders who believed in the methods of the British government and came to be known as moderates. Since these moderate leaders failed to produce desired results, a new stream of leaders came up who were known as the extremists. These extremists disagreed with the traditional methods of moderates that were limited to writing petitions and conducting agitations to get themselves heard. The extremists were not satisfied with a dominion status and demanded complete independence from the British government.

Due to the low-level of political awareness, the achievements of moderate nationalists were not immense. However, by 1907, the moderates were pushed to the background with the emergence of an extremist class in the Congress. The failure to produce any results for the welfare of the people



resulted in the creation of an extremist group and the division of Congress into two factions. Leaders of moderate phase mainly came from Bombay, Bengal and Madras. For example, Badruddin Tayabji, Dada Bhai Naoroji, Pherozshah Mehta, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, K.T. Telang and Govind Ranade were from Bombay. Wumesh Chander Banerji, Anand Mohan Bose. Surendra Nath Banerji and Ramesh Chandra Dutta were from Bengal. Similarly, Subamanya Ayer, Anand Charlu, and Raghavacharya were from Madras. Very few leaders like Madan Mohan Malaviya and Pundit D. P. Dhar came from north India. These moderate leaders treated British rule as a blessing. They sincerely believed that the British rule would make India a developed democratic and liberal country. They had the illusion that the British would introduce modern institutions and remove superstitious belief. They saw England as a source of inspiration and treated English as their political, guru. Many of these nationalist leaders had anglicized life style. All they wanted and expected from the British was a 'reform package' for Indians.

The moderates believed in peaceful methods to get their demands across. They believed in writing petitions and peaceful protests. Though the Moderates failed to make the same impact as the extremists, they petitioned a number of reforms during this time.

- 1. Constitutional reforms:** The Moderates demanded the expansion and reform of the existing Legislative Councils from 1885 to 1892. They demanded the introduction of the system of direct elections and an increase in the number of members and powers of the Legislative Councils. It is true that their agitation forced the Government to pass the Indian Councils Act of 1892 but the moderates were not satisfied with what was given to the people of India. No wonder, they declared the Act of 1892 as a 'hoax.' They demanded a large share for the Indians in the Legislative Councils. By the beginning of the 20th century, the Moderates put forward the claim for Swarajya or self-government within the British Empire on the model of the other self-governing colonies like Australia and Canada. This demand was made from the Congress platform by Gokhale in 1905 and by Dadabhai Naoroji in 1906.
- 2. Demand for economic reforms:** The Congress opposed the British attempt to develop in India the basic characteristics of a colonial economy, namely, the transformation of India into a supplier of raw materials, a market for British manufactures and a field of investment for foreign capital. Moderates took note of all the three forms of contemporary colonial economic exploitation, namely through trade, industry and finance. They organized a powerful all-India agitation against the abandonment of tariff-duties on imports and against the imposition of cotton excise duties. The moderates carried on agitation for the reduction of heavy land revenue payments. They urged the

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Government to provide cheap credit to the peasantry through agricultural banks and to make available irrigation facilities on a large scale. They asked for improvement in the conditions of work of the plantation labourers. They demanded a radical change in the existing pattern of taxation and expenditure which put a heavy burden on the poor while leaving the rich, especially the foreigners, with a very light load. They demanded the abolition of salt tax which hit the poor and lower middle classes hard. The moderates complained of India's growing poverty and economic backwardness and put the blame on the politics of the British Government. They blamed the Government for the destruction of the indigenous industries like the traditional handicrafts industries in the country. They demanded the rapid development of the modern industries which would help in the removal of India's poverty. They wanted the Government to give tariff protection to the Indian industries. They advocated the use of Swadeshi goods and the boycott of British goods. They demanded that the economic drain of India by England must stop. Most of them opposed the large scale investment of foreign capital in the Indian railways, plantations and industries on the ground that it would lead to the suppression of Indian capitalists and the further strengthening of the British hold on India's economy and polity.

- 3. Administrative and miscellaneous reforms:** Moderates criticized the individual administrative measures and worked hard to reform the administrative system which was ridden with corruption, inefficiency and oppression. They demanded the Indianization of the higher grades of the administrative services; the demand was put forward on economic, political and moral grounds. Economically, the high salaries paid to the European put a heavy burden on Indian finance, and contributed to the economic drain. Indians of similar qualifications could be employed on lower salaries. Europeans sent a large part of their salaries back to England and also got their pensions in England. That added to the drain of wealth from India. Politically, the European civil servant ignored the needs of the Indians and favoured the European capitalists at the cost of their Indian counterparts. It was hoped that the Indianization of the services would make the administration more responsive to Indian needs. Morally, the existing system dwarfed the Indian character reducing the tallest Indian to permanent inferiority in his own country. Moderates demanded the separation of the judiciary from the executive so that the people might get some protection from the arbitrary acts of police and bureaucracy. They were opposed to the policy of disarming the people of India by the Government. They opposed the aggressive foreign policy against India's neighbours and protested against the policy of the annexation of Burma, the attack upon Afghanistan and the suppression of the tribal people in North-Western

India. They wanted the Government to spend more money on the spread of education in the country. They also took up the cause of the Indians who had been compelled by poverty to migrate to the British colonies in search of employment. In many of these foreign lands they were subjected to severe oppression and racial discrimination.

- 4. Defence of Civil Rights:** They opposed the restrictions imposed by the government on the modern civil rights, namely the freedom of speech and the press. Almost from the beginning of the 19th century, politically conscious Indians had been attracted to modern civil rights especially the freedom of the press. As early as 1824, Raja Ram Mohan Roy had protested against a regulation restricting the freedom of the press. In the period from 1870 to 1918, the main political task was that of politicization of nationalist ideology. The press was the chief instrument for carrying out this task. Indian newspapers began to find their feet in 1870's. The Vernacular Press Act of 1878, directed only against Indian language newspapers, was conceived in great secrecy and passed at a single sitting of the Imperial Legislative Council. The act provided for the confiscation of the printing press, paper and other materials of a newspaper if the government believed that it was publishing seditious material and had flouted an official warning. Indian nationalist opinion firmly opposed the Act. Various public bodies and the press also campaigned against the Act. Consequently, it was repealed in 1881 by Lord Ripon. Surendranath Banerjee was the first Indian to go to jail in performance of his duty as a journalist. But, the man who is most frequently associated with the struggle for the freedom of press during the nationalist movement was Bal Gangadhar Tilak. In 1897, B. G. Tilak and many other leaders were arrested and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for condemning the government through their speeches and writings. The Natu brothers of Poona were deported without trial. The entire country protested against this attack on the liberties of the people. The arrest of Tilak marked the beginning of new phase of the nationalist movement.

### **Failure of the Moderates**

The basic weakness of the moderates lay their narrow social base. Their movement did not have wide appeal. In fact; the leaders lacked political faith in the masses. The area of their influence was limited to the urban immunity. As they did not have the support of the masses, they declared that the time was not ripe for throwing out a challenge to the foreign rulers. That was likely to invite mature repression. However, it must not be presumed that moderate leaders fought for their narrow interests. Their programmes and policies championed the cause of all sections of the Indian people and represented nation-wide interests against colonial exploitation.

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Critically evaluating the work of the Moderates, it appears that they did not achieve much success. Very few of the reforms advocated by them were carried out. The foreign rulers treated them with contempt. The moderates failed to acquire any roots among the common people and even those who joined the Congress with high hopes were feeling more and more disillusioned. The politics of the moderates was described as 'halting and half-hearted.' Their methods were described as those of mendicancy or beggary through prayers and petitions.

Moderates failed to keep pace with the yearnings and aspirations of the people. They did not realize that the political and economic interests of the Indians and the British clashed and consequently the British people could not be expected to give up their rights and privileges in India without a fight. Moreover, it was during this period that a movement started among the Muslims to keep away from the Congress and that ultimately resulted in the establishment of Pakistan. In spite of their best efforts, the moderates were not able to win over the Muslims.

The social composition of Congress remained, by and large the same till 1905. A. O. Hume tried his best to bring Muslims and peasants into the Congress fold, but with little success. The Muslim elite, especially from Aligarh, felt that they would lose from the elected councils and that the Hindus would dominate (Hindus were in majority in most places). The Muslim elite also opposed competitive examinations for the recruitment into civil services, as it was based on modern English education and the Muslims were far behind the Hindus in this field. They feared Hindu domination in the civil services too. All these factors kept Muslims away from the Congress; neither did the Congress give a serious look into inducting Muslims. This was a big mistake, as they realized in later years.

Thus, it is clear that the Congress was not only concerned with the issues of zamindars, capitalist and English educated professionals, but it also showed concern for almost all the sections of the society. The objectives of the Congress were never the reason for calling it 'moderate', rather its methods and style of functioning. The early Congress leaders believed in the constitutional method of struggle, i.e., through petitions, speeches and articles. One important reason for this was the social composition of early Congress leaders. They came from successful professional background (most of them were lawyers, journalists and academicians) and their personal life-style was anglicised. Perhaps, the first lesson they learned from the British was how to write applications and give petitions. Moreover, politics, for most of them, remained a part-time affair.

### Check Your Progress

1. When and where was the Indian National Congress founded?
2. Who was the first president of the Indian National Congress?
3. What was the basic weakness of the moderates?

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## 7.3 THE RISE OF THE EXTREMISTS

The closing decade of the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a new and younger group within the Indian National Congress, which was sharply critical of the ideology and methods of the old leadership. These ‘angry young men’ advocated the adoption of Swaraj as the goal of the Congress, which was to be achieved by more self-reliant and independent methods. The new group came to be called the extremists in contrast to the older one which began to be referred to as the moderates.

The militant form of nationalism was first found in the teachings and preaching of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Swami Dayananda Saraswati. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee was inspired by the *Bhagavad Gita* and visualized a united India. Swami Vivekananda, who was called the prophet of nationalism by Bipin Chandra Pal, added spiritual dimension to the idea of nationalism. He inspired the youth of his time, more than anyone else. The root of extremism lies in two important factors—the policies of colonial rule, and the failure of moderate leaders to attract younger generation and common people.

### 7.3.1 Factors that Led to the Rise of Extremism

Following are the factors led to the rise of extremists:

- Enlightenment of the true nature of British rule
- Civil Services examinations was disallowed
- Partition of Bengal
- The Indian Council Act, 1892, failed to introduce an elective element in India and provided for selection of some members
- Adoption of the Tariff and Cotton Duties Act of 1894 and 1896 by the Indians
- Curbing freedom of press (1904) and controlling universities through Indian University Act (1904)
- Defeat of Russia (1904-05) by Japan inspired the educated youth

- Circulation of Vernacular newspaper went up from 2,99,000 in 1885 to 8,17,000 in 1905. Some of the popular journals like *Kesari* (Marathi) and *Bangabhasi* (Bengali) opposed the moderate Congress
- The famine of Maharashtra in 1896

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### 7.3.2 Objectives and Methods of Extremists

The new turn in Indian politics found expression in two forms—the formation of the extremist group within the Congress and the growth of revolutionary movement in the country at large. Four prominent Congress leaders—Lokamanya Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh and Lala Lajpat Rai, defined the creed of the new group, gave articulate form to its aspirations and guided its operations. One of the earliest leaders who criticized the moderate politics systematically, in a series of articles titled ‘New Lamps for Old’ was Aurobindo Ghose. He did not like the constitutional method of struggle based on English model and attacked the soft attitude of the Congress. He told them not to take inspiration from England but to take inspiration from French Revolution (1789-99). He also suggested bringing the proletariat (working) class in the national movement. The emerging leaders in the Congress, like Bipin Chandra Pal, Ashwini Kumar Dutta, Lala Lajpat Rai and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, were not happy with the ‘prayers’ and ‘petitions’ methods. They were in favour of self-reliance, constructive work, mass contact through *melas*, public meetings, use of mother tongue in education and political works. They argued that ‘good government is no substitute for self-government’. The issue of Swadeshi Movement widened the gap between the moderates and the extremists. The extremists wanted to spread the movement in the entire country and complete non-cooperation with the government. Lajpat Rai and Tilak were more aggressive in their ideas and plans.

Lajpat Rai thundered ‘no national is worthy of any political status if it cannot distinguish between begging rights and claiming them’. He further argued that ‘sovereignty rests with the people; the state exists for them and rules in their name’. But the true founder of militant nationalism was Bal Gangadhar Tilak. He criticized the moderates in his unique style—‘we will not achieve any success in our labours if we croak once a year like a frog’. He was quick to set the political goal of India, i.e., ‘Swaraj’ or self-government instead of reform in administration. He showed greater confidence and ability when he declared ‘Swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it’. He was a pioneer in many ways. He used religious symbols and festivals, like Ganesh festival since 1894, to mobilize people and he made patriotic-cum-historical cult through Shivaji festival since 1896 to inspire the youth. He even carried out the no-revenue campaign in 1896–97, during severe famine in Maharashtra. He called upon the government to take those measures of relief, which were



provided under law in the Famine Relief Code. Through his paper, *Kesari*, he made an appeal to the people to refuse to pay taxes. He wrote angrily, 'Can you not be bold even in the grip of death'. He also started Boycott Movement on the issue of countervailing Cotton Excise Duty Act of 1896. It should be clearly understood that the extremists' demand for Swaraj was a demand for 'complete freedom from foreign control and full independence to manage national affairs without any foreign restraints'. The Swaraj of the moderate leaders was merely a demand for colonial self-government within the Empire. The methods employed by the two groups (moderates and extremists) were different in their tempo and approach. The extremists had no faith in the benevolence of the British public or parliament, nor were they convinced of the efficacy of merely holding conferences. The extremists also affirmed their faith in passive resistance, mass agitation and strong will to suffer or make self-sacrifices. The new leadership sought to create a passionate love for liberty, accompanied by a spirit of sacrifice and a readiness to suffer for the cause of the country. They strove to root out from the people's mind the omnipotence of the ruler, and instead give them self-reliance and confidence in their own strength. They had deep faith in the strength of the masses and they planned to achieve Swaraj through mass action. They, therefore, pressed for political work among the masses and for direct political action by the masses. The extremists advocated boycott of the foreign goods, use of *swadeshi* goods, national education and passive resistance.

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### Check Your Progress

4. Where was the militant form of nationalism first found in India?
5. What issue widened the gap between the extremists and moderates in the Congress?

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## 7.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. The Indian National Congress was founded on 28 December 1885 at Sir Tej Pal Sanskrit Vidyalaya, Bombay.
2. W.C. Banerjee was the first president of the Indian National Congress.
3. The basic weakness of the moderates lay their narrow social base. Their movement did not have wide appeal.
4. The militant form of nationalism was first found in the teachings and preaching of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Swami Dayananda Saraswati.



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5. The issue of Swadeshi Movement widened the gap between the moderates and the extremists. The extremists wanted to spread the movement in the entire country and complete non-cooperation with the government. Lajpat Rai and Tilak were more aggressive in their ideas and plans.

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## 7.5 SUMMARY

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- Presence of number of political associations across the country, and spread of the ideals of patriotism and nationalism prepared the foundation of the Indian National Congress.
- The Indian National Congress was founded on 28 December 1885 at Sir Tej Pal Sanskrit Vidyalaya, Bombay.
- Some of the members of the Indian National Congress were Pherozeshah Mehta, W.C. Banerji, Anandamohan Bose, Badruddin Tyabji, Surendranath Banerji, and Romesh Chandra Dutt. This association was different from others as none of the earlier associations had complete independence as their agenda.
- The Congress made some demands, which can be divided into three categories: political, administrative and economic.
- The primary objective of the Congress was to make people feel that they belong to a single nation—India. The diversity in India in terms of caste, creed, religion, tradition, language made this a difficult task.
- Since its inception in 1885 till the time India won its Independence in 1947, the Congress was the largest and most prominent Indian political organization. In its initial stages, the Indian National Congress was a political unit, however, in due course of time it supported the cause of social reform and human development.
- The Congress was not only concerned with the issues of zamindars, capitalist and English educated professionals, but it also showed concern for almost all the sections of the society.
- The closing decade of the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a new and younger group within the Indian National Congress, which was sharply critical of the ideology and methods of the old leadership. These ‘angry young men’ advocated the adoption of Swaraj as the goal of the Congress, which was to be achieved by more self-reliant and independent methods.
- The militant form of nationalism was first found in the teachings and preaching of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Swami Dayananda Saraswati.

- The root of extremism lies in two important factors—the policies of colonial rule, and the failure of moderate leaders to attract younger generation and common people.
- The new turn in Indian politics found expression in two forms—the formation of the extremist group within the Congress and the growth of terrorism or revolutionary movement in the country at large. Four prominent Congress leaders, including Lokamanya Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh and Lala Lajpat Rai, defined the creed of the new group, gave articulate form to its aspirations and guided its operations.

## NOTES

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### 7.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Petitions:** It refers to a formal written request, typically one signed by many people, appealing to authority in respect of a particular cause.
- **Safety-Valve:** In this context, it refers to organizations which serve to allow discontented individuals to act out their opposition to other elements, as it were ‘to let off steam’.
- **Swadeshi:** It was a political movement in British India that encouraged domestic production and the boycott of foreign, especially British, goods as a step towards self-reliance.
- **Swaraj:** It generally means generally self-governance or self-rule.

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### 7.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short Answer Questions

1. Why were the moderates in the Indian National Congress a failure?
2. Define ‘swaraj’.
3. Write a short note on the objectives of extremists.

#### Long Answer Questions

1. Examine the formation of the Indian National Congress.
2. Describe the factors which led to the rise of the extremists within the Congress. What were the methods of the extremists?
3. Discuss some of the early nationalists in India.

**NOTES**

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**7.8 FURTHER READINGS**

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# UNIT 8 PARTITION OF BENGAL AND HOME RULE MOVEMENT

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*Partition of Bengal and  
Home Rule Movement*

## NOTES

### Structure

- 8.0 Introduction
- 8.1 Objectives
- 8.2 Partition of Bengal
- 8.3 The Home Rule Movement and Some Personalities
- 8.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 8.5 Summary
- 8.6 Key Words
- 8.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 8.8 Further Readings

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## 8.0 INTRODUCTION

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In this unit, we will discuss the partition of Bengal. The Partition of Bengal in 1905 was carried out on the orders of Viceroy Lord Curzon. The British reason for the partition was that the province was simply too big to be administered. However, Indians suspected that the partition was carried out as part of the divide and rule policy of the British imperialists. The Partition of Bengal sparked the first real mass movement of opposition to the British, and transformed the Indian National Congress from a party of middle and upper class lawyers to an organization with nation-wide appeal.

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## 8.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Analyse the role of partition of Bengal in Indian nationalism
- Discuss the factors responsible for the partition of Bengal
- Examine the rise of Home Rule League under Tilak and Annie Besant
- Discuss the Lucknow Pact and its role in unity at Lucknow

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## 8.2 PARTITION OF BENGAL

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The decision to partition Bengal was announced under the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon (1899-1905) on 16 October 1905. In the history of modern Bengal, this was recorded to be a very significant event. Since 1765, Bengal included Bihar and Orissa, which was considered by British India to be very

large for a single province. Because of its massive size, it was difficult for the British Empire to execute proper administration, and, therefore, it felt that the province required reorganization and intelligent division.

## **NOTES**

### **Factors Responsible for the Partition of Bengal**

The Lieutenant Governor of Bengal was responsible for managing an area of 189,000 sq. miles. Moreover, by 1903, the population had grown to 78.50 million. Several districts of eastern Bengal did not receive proper attention due to lack of efficient communication and governance. The government focused most of its attention only on Calcutta (now Kolkata) and its nearby districts. The cruel administration of the landlords made the peasants' life miserable. The administrative system of a province did not have adequate staff, which significantly affected trade, commerce and education. The provinces of east Bengal in particular suffered the most as they were cut off by rivers and streams. Inefficient administration also led to organized piracy in the waterways for almost a century.

Besides administrative difficulties, other factors which prompted the British Empire to consider reorganizing the territorial boundaries of Bengal were problems of famine, defence and linguistics. These factors prompted to rearrange the administrative system of Bengal, which was, however, irregular. Some of these arrangements were as follows:

- 1836: The upper provinces were separated from Bengal and were placed under the control of a Lieutenant Governor.
- 1854: Direct administration of Bengal was taken away from the Governor-General-in-Council and was placed under a Lieutenant Governor.
- 1874: Assam and Sylhet were separated from Bengal in order to form a chief-commissionership.
- 1898: Lushai Hills district was annexed from Bengal and placed under the administration of chief commissioner of Assam.

In 1903, the first proposal for the partition of Bengal was considered, mainly on the grounds of inefficient administration. As this raised a hue and cry, officials first drafted the possible advantages of a partitioned Bengal. According to the original scheme of partition, the division was to be made on a geographical basis, and not on political or communal grounds.

The government argued that the decision to partition Bengal was based on administrative requirements with three main objectives, which are as follows:

1. It wanted to reduce the burden of administration of the government of Bengal and ensure more efficient administration in the remote districts.

2. The government wanted to encourage the development of Assam, which was ruled by a Chief Commissioner, by expanding its jurisdiction and provide it with an outlet to the sea.
3. The government wanted to unite the Oriya-speaking population, which was scattered, under a single administration.

Moreover, the government also had plans to separate Chittagong and the districts of Dacca (now Dhaka) and Mymensingh from Bengal and join them with Assam. It also planned to annex Chhota Nagpur from Bengal and include in the Central Provinces.

In January 1904, these proposals of partition were published. In February 1904, Lord Curzon went on an official tour to assess the condition of the districts of eastern Bengal and to consider the opinion of the public on the proposals of the government. He discussed the proposals of partition with important personalities of different districts and also delivered speeches on the same in Dhaka, Chittagong and Mymensingh (all of them now in Bangladesh). This tour further propelled his decision to seriously put into action the proposal of partition. The proposal would involve:

- The formation of an autonomous new province under the control of a lieutenant governor with a Legislative Council
- A self-governing revenue authority
- Transfer of a large territory that would validate an efficient administration

The governments of Assam and Bengal gave their consents to the proposal, according to which the new province would comprise of:

- Tripura
- The divisions of Chittagong
- Dhaka
- Rajshahi (excluding Darjeeling)
- The district of Malda amalgamated with Assam

Therefore, as per the proposal, Bengal had to hand over not only these large eastern territories but also surrender five Hindi-speaking states to the Central Provinces. However, the Central Provinces would give Sambalpur and a small tract of five Uriya-speaking states to Bengal as an addition to its western territory. After the division, Bengal would have only an area of 141,580 sq. miles out of 189,000 sq. miles. It would be left with a population of 54 million, with 42 million Hindus and 9 million Muslims.

The name of the new province was proposed to be 'Eastern Bengal and Assam', which would have its capital at Dhaka, with subsidiary headquarters at Chittagong. It would comprise of:

## NOTES

- Area: 106,540 sq. miles
- Population: 31 million with 12 million Hindus and 8 million Muslims

## NOTES

It was proposed that the new province would have a Legislative Council and a Board of Revenue with two members. The jurisdiction of the Calcutta High Court would remain undisturbed. The new province would also have a well-defined western boundary, along with significant social, geographical, linguistic and ethnological features. A unique feature of the new province would be the concentration of neglected typical homogenous Muslim population of Bengal. It would also have the entire tea industry, except Darjeeling, and a major section of the jute growing area under a single administration. The final decision was publicized by the government in a Resolution dated 19 July 1905 and the partition of Bengal was finally brought into effect on 16 October 1905.

The original proposals for the partition were published at the end of 1903, which was strongly protested, particularly by the dominant and educated middle-class Hindus. The lawyers of Calcutta anticipated that the creation of the new province would significantly affect the importance of the Calcutta High Court and also result in the formation of a Court of Appeal at Dhaka. The journalists were worried that the new province would lead to the development of local newspapers which would affect the circulation of Calcutta Press. The businessmen also feared that the formation of the new province would shift the trade to Chittagong from Calcutta, as it was much nearer and cheaper port, and therefore affect their livelihood. Even the zamindars, owning large estates in both east and west Bengal, feared that the new province would force them to maintain separate establishments at Dhaka, which would incur high expenditure. The partition was seen by the educated Bengali Hindus as Curzon's intentional plan to repress the spirit of nationalism and the strengthening unity of the Bengali-speaking population.

Most of Bengal's trade and commerce and other professions were mostly controlled by the Hindus of Bengal who were also in charge of the rural society. They were worried that the partition of Bengal would make them a minority in the new province, which would mainly comprise of the whole of Orissa and Bihar. According to them, the government's aim was mainly to encourage the growth of Muslim power in eastern Bengal in order to suppress the rapidly growing national consciousness of the educated Hindu community. The partition was therefore strongly opposed by economic, social and communal interests.

From the very beginning, the partition was strongly opposed by some important administrators, the Indian and Bengali press, and also the British press and the Anglo-Indian press. The partition resulted in violent protests in west Bengal, which further stimulated the Indian nationalism. This further encouraged the Indian National Congress to take the lead in the Indian



Nationalist Movement. The Indian National Congress had remarkable strength and dynamism which not only attracted the middle class but also the nation-wide mass population to participate in the Indian Nationalist Movement.

The partition was seen by the Indian National Congress as the government's 'divide and rule' policy. It also was viewed as a strong opposition of the government towards the honest intellectuals of the Indian society. Staunch religious Bengali Hindus, who saw Bengal as their 'Mother Goddess', viewed the partition as the anatomization of their 'Mother province'. The Bengali nationalism aimed to defeat the partition, for which mass meetings were held as a form of protest and the Swadeshi Movement boycotted the British-manufactured goods. The main objective of Indian nationalism was Swaraj, which it wanted to achieve with its two twin weapons—Swadeshi and Boycott movements.

Indian political leaders, like Surendranath Banerjee, and journalists, like Krishna Kumar Mitra, encouraged people to break all contacts with the British officials, boycott the use of British goods and observe mourning for the freedom fighters who had laid their lives while fighting for the nation. A meeting was held on 7 August 1905 wherein it was decided to refrain from purchasing British goods as long as the resolution of partition was not withdrawn. Patriotic songs, written by Bengali poets, playwrights and lyricists, including Rabindranath Tagore, Rajanikanta Sen and Dwijendralal Ray, further stimulated the national spirit.

On 28 September 1905, the Hindu religious passion reached its peak when several Hindus in Calcutta gathered at the temple of goddess Kali, the symbol of power and energy in Hinduism. Although such a religious fervour strengthened the unity among the Hindu masses, it aroused antagonism in average Muslim minds, which created a rift between the Hindus and Muslims. As an economic movement, the 'Swadeshi' Movement was accepted by the Muslims. But it provoked the Muslims when the Movement was used to fight against the partition, which was supported by the Muslims, and it had religious influences of Hinduism.

Although the spirit of nationalism against the partition of Bengal originated in Bengal, it spread across the country in Punjab, Poona (now Pune), Madras, Bombay and other cities. The Indians boycotted the British products and vowed to wear only swadeshi cotton and clothing materials that were produced in India. The Swadeshi Movement not only stimulated the Indian cotton mills but also other factories, such as the match factories, glassblowing shops, iron and steel foundries. The protests also provoked people to boycott English education and encouraged them for national education. The movement for national education also reached far and wide places in Bengal and also extended to Banaras (now Varanasi), where it motivated national leader and freedom fighter, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, to establish the Banaras Hindu University in 1910.

## NOTES

## NOTES

The students in Bengal, whether school or college, actively participated in the campaigns of Swadeshi and Boycott movements. As a retaliation, the government issued the Carlyle Circular on 10 October 1905, according to which all the magistrates and collectors were asked to suppress the participation of the students in the Swadeshi Movement. This repressive measure was severely condemned by both students and teachers, whose protests further strengthened and took a universal approach. As a matter of fact, this protest movement resulted in the first organized student movement in Bengal, which was known as the 'Anti-Circular Society'. Along with this, a militant student organization was also formed.

In the beginning, the anti-partition movement was lawful and nonviolent but when it was unsuccessful in achieving the desired results, the movement attracted the participation of more militant leaders. The two methods used to make this objective successful were boycott and terrorism. As a result, the younger generation became a part of politics unintentionally and adopted terrorist methods by erratically using firearms, bombs and pistols. The once peaceful protest now became so violent and aggressive that it went to the extent of commitment of several assassinations and attempts to kill British officials including Sir Andrew Fraser, Lieutenant Governor of Bengal from 1903 to 1908. Consequently, the terrorist movement soon became an integral part of the Swadeshi agitation. From 1908 to 1910, the anti-partition movement in Bengal reached its peak and so did the repressive measures of the government, which became stern and cruel increasingly. The national newspapers, including the *Bande Mataram*, *Sandhya* and *Jugantar*, extensively wrote about the new militant spirit and played a vital role in circulating the ideas of revolution and nationalism.

At its annual session in 1907 in Surat, the Indian National Congress was divided into two groups—one being moderate, liberal and evolutionary; and the other extremist, militant and revolutionary. Some important moderate leaders were Mahatma Gandhi, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Chitta Ranjan Das and Bhagat Singh, while some important extremist leaders included Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Surendranath Banerjee. Tilak's extremist party, which included the young revolutionaries, mainly supporting the 'cult of the bomb and the gun', which was opposed by moderate leaders as they feared that such activities would inevitably result in uncontrollable violence and disorder. Although Surendranath Banerjea was an important extremist leader, he was against terrorist activities.

In 1903, when the proposal for partition was published for the first time, it was strongly opposed by the Muslims. It was condemned by the weekly newspaper, *Moslem Chronicle*; political organization, the Central National Muhamedan Association; and Chowdhury Kazemuddin Ahmad Siddiky, the zamindar of the Baliadi estate in east Bengal, social worker and political

personality of Bengal towards the end of the nineteenth century. In the beginning, the proposal was also referred to as 'beastly' by Nawab Sir Khwaja Salimullah Bahadur, the fourth Nawab of Dhaka and one of the leading Muslim politicians during the British Raj. Initially, the Muslims opposed the control of a new province under the rule of a chief commissioner as they felt that it would severely affect their educational, social and other interests. They also feared that the partition would threaten the unity of Bengal.

However, the elite and the educated Muslims criticized the ideas of the extremist militant nationalism as they believed it to be against the spirit of the religion of Islam. As a result, the Muslim press advised its educated co-religionists to remain loyal and committed to the government. Largely, the supporters of the Swadeshi Movement were unsuccessful in winning the trust and support of the Muslim masses in east Bengal. The revolutionary spirit for the partition did not continue for long among the Muslims as the concept of the formation of a self-contained separate province changed their views completely. They realized that as a result of the partition, the new administration would give special attention to their problems.

As a result, the Muslims cordially greeted Sir Joseph Bampfylde Fuller, the first Lieutenant Governor of the new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. The *Moslem Chronicle* also changed its outlook towards the partition. The formation of the new province strengthened the unity of the Muslims and motivated them to form an association which would give them a platform to put forward their views and aspirations in terms of social and political issues. To champion the Muslim interests, a political front called the Mohammedan Provincial Union was established on 16 October 1905. This association invited all other existing Muslim organizations and associations to affiliate with it and Nawab Sir Khwaja Salimullah Bahadur was chosen as its patron.

Despite this, a minor group of educated liberal Muslims continued to extend their support to the anti-partition movement and the Swadeshi Movement. Although less in number, they strongly supported the Indian National Congress and opposed the partition. One of the prominent figures of this broad-minded group was Khwaja Atiqullah, a philanthropist and a man of liberal, progressive and secular ideas. In 1906, at the Calcutta session of the Congress, he moved a resolution which condemned the partition of Bengal. The important Muslim leaders who urged their community members to participate in the anti-partition campaign were:

- Abdur Rasul: A nationalist leader and lawyer
- Khan Bahadur Muhammad Yusuf: A political leader and a member of the Management Committee of the Central National Muhamedan Association

## NOTES

## NOTES

- Sheikh Mujibur Rahman: A Bengali nationalist politician and the founder of Bangladesh
- A.H. Abdul Halim Ghaznavi: A politician, philanthropist and a zamindar
- Syed Ismail Hossain Siraji: A Bengali writer, orator and peasant leader
- Muhammad Gholam Hossain: A writer and a promoter of Hindu-Muslim unity
- Maulvi Liaqat Hussain: A liberal Muslim who vehemently opposed the 'divide and rule' policy of the British
- Syed Hafizur Rahman Chowdhury of Bogra
- Abul Kasem of Burdwan

However, liberal nationalist Muslims including A.H. Ghaznavi and Khan Bahadur Muhammad Yusuf supported only the Swadeshi Movement and not the Boycott Movement.

The partition created a rift between the Hindus and the Muslims. A section of the Muslim community made an attempt to promote harmonious relations between the two religions. Well-known Bengali statesmen, Abul Kasem Fazlul Huq and Nibaran Chandra Das, promoted non-communal ideas through their weekly and monthly journals, *Balaka* and *Bharat Suhrd*, respectively. Due to this rift, only a minor section of Muslim intellectuals became a member of the Indian National Congress and participated in the anti-partition movement.

Majority of the Muslims were in favour of the partition. The circumstances generated over the partition of Bengal further led to the establishment of the All India Muslim League in 1906, which supported the partition. The partition was also supported by traditional and reformist Muslim groups—the Faraizi, Wahabi and Taiyuni. Moreover, the Bengali Muslim press supported the partition, while monthly magazine, *Islam Pracharak*, portrayed Swadeshi as a Hindu movement. The Muslim intelligentsia disliked the Swadeshi Movement as it was tied to the anti-partition agitation and had religious tone added to it.

To some extent, the Swadeshi Movement was considered responsible for encouraging separatist forces within the Muslim society. The Muslims felt unprotected because of the dominance of the Hindus in trade and commerce, and this prompted them to protect their own interests. The pattern of the land system in Bengal during the partition also influenced the mindset of the Muslims significantly. The Hindu zamindars were not taking effective measures to improve the conditions of several raiyats, who were mostly Muslims. Furthermore, the agrarian disputes between the tenants and the landlords further aggravated because of communal discord. It was asserted

that the Hindu zamindars tried to impose Swadeshi ideas on their Muslim tenants and tempted them to join the anti-partition movement.

As an attempt to emphasize their separate identity, an Islamic conference was organized by the Muslims in 1906 at Keraniganj in Dhaka. Muslims masses of eastern Bengal and Assam were encouraged by their community members to break all relations with Hindus. The anti-protest movement adopted several measures, such as the song *Bande Mataram* as the song of inspiration or using the cult of Shivaji as the national hero, which alienated the Muslims further. As a result of the clashes between the Hindus and the Muslims, the Comilla riot broke out in March 1907, which was followed by Jamalpur riots in April 1907. These communal disturbances were not only restricted to eastern Bengal and Assam but also spread in other places of the country. These riots marked a turning point in the history of modern Bengal.

The weakening of the Hindu-Muslim relationship resulted in several political changes in the policies of the government. It further affected the relations of the Bengali Muslim leaders with their non-Bengali counterparts. The communal relations in east Bengal were severely affected by these political changes. The implementation of several constitutional reforms, particularly the Morley-Minto Reforms in 1909 that introduced separate representation for the Muslims, marked a turning point in further deteriorating the Hindu-Muslim relations.

The officials of the new province passionately and wholeheartedly conducted its development works. The leaders of the anti-partition movement accused Sir Joseph Bampfylde Fuller for being extremely partial to the Muslims. Due to some indifference with the government, Fuller resigned in August 1906. However, his resignation was seen by the Muslims as a political victory of the Hindus. They also felt that the government had surrendered to the pressures of the anti-partition movement and this made them overlook the loyalty of the Muslims to the government.

As a result, the bitterness between the two communities became more critical in the new province. The Hindu landlords felt threatened by the acts of terrorism by the Muslim agitators, as a result of which the landlord-tenant relationship in the new province deteriorated and took a communal turn. The Muslim leaders felt that the protest of the Hindus against the partition of Bengal was basically a communal movement, which was a threat to the Muslims as a separate community. Thus, they now aimed at uniting the different sections of their community to create an opposition movement against the Hindus. They decided to faithfully follow their leaders, Nawab Bahadur Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhury (a noted philanthropist, zamindar, social worker and politician) and Nawab Sir Khwaja Salimullah Bahadur, and established organizations like the Mohammedan Provincial Union.

## NOTES

## NOTES

Even though the severity of the Hindus-Muslim relations had reached its peak, some educated upper class Hindus and Muslims wanted to put an end to this communalism. On 15 March 1907, some significant members of both the communities met the Viceroy Lord Minto and requested him to put an end to this communal violence and promote religious harmony between the two communities.

Meanwhile, on 30 December 1906, the All India Muslim League was formed in Dhaka. In the first meeting at Dhaka, one of the resolutions of the League stated: 'That this meeting in view of the clear interest of the Muhammadans of Eastern Bengal consider that Partition is sure to prove beneficial to the Muhammadan community which constitute the vast majority of the populations of the new province and that all such methods of agitation such as boycotting should be strongly condemned and discouraged'.

The government further aggravated the communal resentment between the Hindus and Muslims. On one hand, it decided to cancel the partition to tone down the bitterness of the aggressive Bengali Hindus, while on the other hand, it stated the Muslims had a major population in the new province of eastern Bengal. It also said that the interests of the Muslims would be protected and they would be having a special representation in the Legislative Councils and the local bodies.

### **Reunion of Bengal**

In 1910, Lord Hardinge succeeded Lord Minto as the Viceroy of India. During his tenure, a Coronation Durbar was held in December 1911 to greet the King of England, George V. King George V announced the annulment of the partition of Bengal, which was decided to formally end on 1 April 1912. Besides, the King also announced certain administrative changes in India, which are as follows:

1. The Government of India shifted the capital from Calcutta to Delhi. This attempt to shift the capital to the site of past Muslim glory was made to pacify the Muslim community of Bengal who were afflicted by the loss of provincial power and privilege in eastern Bengal.
2. The five main Bengali speaking divisions, including Burdwan (also known as Bardhaman), Dhaka, The Presidency, Chittagong and Rajshahi, were to be united under one Presidency, which would be governed by a Governor-in-Council.
3. A province comprising of Chhota Nagpur, Orissa and Bihar was to be administered by a Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council with a Legislative Council.
4. Assam was to go back under the administration of a Chief Commissioner again.



Although the reunification of Bengal pacified the Bengali Hindus to a great extent, they were severely affected by the shift of the capital to Delhi as it demoted Calcutta from an imperial to a mere provincial status. The shift of the capital to Delhi from Calcutta, which was the nerve centre of political activity, weakened the influence of the Bengali Hindus significantly. The government was enjoying the main advantage of the capital shift as it had sensed that the agitated atmosphere of Bengal could have shaken their establishment in India.

Lord Carmichael was appointed as the first Governor of Bengal after the annulment of the partition of Bengal. Under his tenure, Bengal was turned into a Governor's province in 1912. The agitation of the partition of Bengal had far-reaching effects on Indian history and nationalism. Its twin weapons of Swadeshi and Boycott became a statement of belief for the Indian National Congress and was effectively used in other parts of India as well in future conflicts. They formed the basis of Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Cooperation, Satyagraha and Khadi movements.

However, the Muslims were severely affected by the annulment of the partition as a result of the agitation against it. The support of the Congress to the anti-partition movement was disliked by the politically conscious Muslims, who now strongly felt that their interests were not safe in the hands of the Congress. As a result, they became more anxious to emphasize their separate communal identity. Therefore, they became dependent on the Muslim League to protect their interests against the dominance of the Hindus in India, which was still undivided.

The travails of Bengal played a vital role in initiating the Indian nationalism. Besides, the agitation against the partition also was responsible for Muslim nationalism, which encouraged them in separatist politics. Not only the Bengali Muslims but also the Muslims of the whole of India were severely disappointed by the annulment of the Partition of Bengal as they felt that the agitation had become much more important to the government than their loyalty. Subsequently, the Muslims felt dejected which forced them to take an anti-British stance.

### **Check Your Progress**

1. When was the decision to partition Bengal announced?
2. Why did the Muslim intelligentsia dislike the Swadeshi movement?
3. Who was appointed the first Governor of Bengal after the annulment of the partition of Bengal?

## **NOTES**



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### 8.3 THE HOME RULE MOVEMENT AND SOME PERSONALITIES

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#### NOTES

With the rise of revolutionary movements and extremism, the British government followed a two-edged policy: (i) adopting the policies of repression and dividing the Indians, specifically the Hindus and the Muslims; and (ii) bringing about gradual reforms which resulted in passing of the Act of 1909. The formation of the Muslim League in 1906 and the clause of the communal electorate system in the Act of 1909 discredited the British in the eyes of most of the Indians. Still a lull remained in Indian politics for some time because the moderates grudgingly decided to cooperate with the government for some more time. The outbreak of World War I provided a new impetus to the national movement.

As we have already seen, when World War I started the Indian National Congress supported the government in its war efforts with the presumption that the British government will bring about some administrative reforms for the benefit of the Indians after the war. However, the extremists viewed it as a God-sent opportunity and took a decision to advance their own cause. They thought that it was the fitting time to force Britain to agree to the Indian demands for extracting political concessions during their time of difficulties.

The extremists were basically influenced by the emergence of the Irish Home Rule Movement under the leadership of Issac Butt. B.G. Tilak returned to active politics in 1914 after completing his term of imprisonment. He tried to join hands with the Congress on the issue of demanding 'Home Rule' for India. However, when he did not succeed in this, he founded the Home Rule League on 28 April 1916 with its headquarters at Poona. Due to the British indigestibility for the word 'swaraj', Tilak opted for the term 'Home Rule' in place of 'swaraj' as the main objective of the movement.

The main aim of the Home Rule League was to 'attain Home-Rule or self-government within the British Empire by all constitutional means and to educate and organise public opinion in the country towards the attainment of the same'. Annie Besant, an Irish lady, had arrived in India as a member of the Theosophical Society. She later joined the Congress. Besant had set up a Home Rule League in London in 1914 and ultimately founded a Home Rule League on 15 September 1916. The latter had its headquarters at Adyar near Madras. Both these leagues supported each other and hence, divided their areas of activities among themselves. Tilak's Home Rule League confined its activities to Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Berar, while Besant's League functioned in the rest of the country.

Tilak and Besant toured all over India and propagated the message of the Home Rule among the masses. They used the means of newspapers, mass meetings and distribution of leaflets to spread their message. Tilak used

*Young India* to stir the popular sentiments. Besant, on her part, used *New India* and *Common Weal* to educate the masses about the League's objectives. The movement attracted liberal leaders such as Motilal Nehru and Tej Bahadur Sapru who became its members. Hence, the Home Rule Movement turned a powerful phenomenon during the phase of World War I. The movement strived for the grant of self-government to India within the British dominions. However, it always remained within constitutional limits.

The government put strenuous efforts to suppress the movement through force. Besant was forced to stop the publication of *New India* and was sentenced to home imprisonment. When action was taken against Besant and Tilak on their refusal to provide securities and personal bonds, the movement acquired an all India character. The movement infused the spirit of patriotism, fearlessness, self-respect and sacrifice among the people. Ultimately, the government relented and in 1917 by Montague's declaration was receptive to the idea of self-government for India through a gradual process. Annie Besant was elected as the Congress President in 1917 and the objective of 'Home Rule' was accepted by the Congress. It was the biggest success of this movement.

However, the movement got weakened after some time and the Home Rule movement came to an abrupt end. Some of the reasons for this were: the passing of the Government of India Act, 1919; factionalism in the Congress on the issue of the Act; departure of Tilak to London for a legal case; and Besant's consent to the new scheme of reforms of 1919. Although the Home Rule Movement could not achieve its objectives, it kept the fire of nationalism burning among the Indians during the course of the war. It was crucial because during this period the congress had failed to provide any direction to the people.

On the issue of the significance of the Home Rule Movement, S.R. Mehrotra states: 'The Home Rule Leagues created a significant impact on the national movement in India. For the first time an agitation had been aroused on a nation-wide scale and a network of political committees covered much of India.'

The objectives of Home Rule League were:

1. Work for national education, social and political reforms.
2. Tilak linked up the question of swaraj with the demand for the formation of linguistic states and education in vernacular. He also used Home Rule to put an end to caste feeling among the common people and advocated abolition of untouchability.
3. Self-Government for India in British Empire.
4. Tilak (April) and Annie Besant & S. Subramaniam Iyer (September) established Home Rule Leagues in 1916.
5. Tilak's League was to work in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Central Provinces and Berar and Annie Besant's in the rest of India.

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6. Annie Besant set up the newspapers—New India, Commonweal and Young India (1916)
7. Tilak published—Mahratta & Kesari
8. Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Shankarlal Banker, Indulal Yagnik, George Arundale, B P Wadia and L. P. Ramaswamy Iyer were in Besant's League.
9. Home Rule Movement declined after Besant accepted the proposed Montford Reforms and Tilak went to Britain to fight the libel suit against Valentine Chirol's Indian Unrest.

### Methods

- Create public opinion in favour of Home Rule through public meeting, also organising discussions, reading rooms propaganda through public meetings, newspapers, pamphlets, posters, etc.
- Emphasis shifted to the masses permanently organizational link established between town and country prepared a generation of ardent nationalists, influenced Moderate-Extremist reunion at Lucknow (1916).

### Results

- (a) It discredited moderates of INC and created condition for readmission of neo-nationalists in 1916
- (b) The movement marks the beginning for attainment of *Swaraj*.
- (c) Education Programme
- (d) Montague declaration of 1917—Greatest political achievement

### Unity at Lucknow

The nationalists very soon realized that disunity among them was harming their cause and that they should put up a united front against the government. The emerging nationalist feeling in the country and the urge for national unity resulted in historical developments during the Lucknow session of the Indian National Congress in 1916. Most importantly, the two factions of the Congress were reunited. The old controversies were no longer relevant because most of the leaders realized that the split in the Congress had borne political inactivity. Tilak, after his release from jail in 1914, instantly felt the change in the situation and strived to unify the two streams of Congressmen. To pacify the moderate nationalists, he stated:

I may state once for all that we are trying in India, as the Irish Home-rulers have been all along doing in Ireland, for a reform of the system of administration and not for the overthrow of government; and I have no hesitation in saying that the acts of violence which have been committed in the different parts of India are not only repugnant to me, but have, in

my opinion, only unfortunately retarded to a great extent, the pace of our political progress.

Further, the emerging tide of nationalism forced the old leaders to welcome Lokamanya Tilak and other militant nationalists back into the Congress. The Lucknow Congress was the first united Congress since 1907. It asked for further constitutional reforms as a step towards self-government. At Lucknow, the Congress and the All India Muslim League buried their old differences and forwarded united political demands before the government.

The War and the two Home Rule Leagues were generating a new sentiment in the country which changed the character of the Congress. Similarly, the Muslim League had also been undergoing gradual changes. We have already observed earlier that the younger section of the educated Muslims was taking to bolder form of nationalist politics. The War period witnessed further developments in that direction. As a result, in 1914 the government took punitive measures against the publication of *Al Hilal* of Abul Kalam Azad and the *Comrade* of Maulana Mohamed Ali. The government also interned the Ali Brothers (Mohamed Ali and Shaukat Ali), Hasrat Mohani and Abul Kalam Azad. Even though partially, the League at least reflected the political militancy of its younger members. It steadily began to outgrow the limited political outlook of the Aligarh school of thought and shifted nearer to the general Congress policies.

This growing unity in the objectives of the Congress and the League culminated in the signing of the Congress–League Pact, popularly called the Lucknow Pact. Lokamanya Tilak and Mohammad Ali Jinnah played an important role in bringing the two together. They believed that India can win self-government only through Hindu-Muslim unity. Tilak stated at the time:

It has been said, gentlemen, by some that we Hindus have yielded too much to our Mohammedan brethren. I am sure I represent the sense of the Hindu community all over India when I say that we could not have yielded too much. I would not care if the rights of self-government are granted to the Mohammedan community only.

I would not care if they are granted to the lower and the lowest classes of the Hindu population. When we have to fight against a third party, it is a very important thing that we stand on this platform united, united in race, united in religion, as regard all different shades of political creed.

The two organizations passed similar resolutions at their sessions. They also put forward a joint scheme of political reforms on the basis of separate electorates and demanded that the British government should make a declaration to the effect that it will confer self-government to India at the earliest.

In the field of Hindu-Muslim unity, the Lucknow Pact marked an important step forward. Regrettably, it did not involve the Hindu and Muslim masses and accepted the harmful principle of separate electorates.

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It was meant to bring together the educated Hindus and Muslims as distinct political entities. But it lacked on the critical issue of secularizing their political outlook, which would have made them understand that in politics they possessed no distinct interests as Hindus or Muslims. Therefore, the Lucknow Pact left the scope for the future resurgence of communalism in Indian politics.

Nonetheless, the immediate effect of the developments at Lucknow was wonderful. The unity between the moderate and militant nationalists as well as between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League created immense political enthusiasm in the country. Even the British government found it essential to appease the nationalists. Till then it had heavily depended upon repression to control the nationalist agitation.

Earlier, scores of radical nationalists and revolutionaries had been jailed or interned under the provisions of nefarious Defence of India Act and other similar regulations. The government now realized the requirement to appease nationalist opinion and on 20 August 1917 declared that its policy in India was ‘the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government of India as an integral part of the British empire’.

In July 1918, the Montague-Chelmsford reforms were declared. However, the Indian nationalism could not be appeased. Actually, the Indian national movement was soon to enter its third and last phase, i.e., the phase of mass struggle or the Gandhian Era.

### Check Your Progress

4. List two objectives of the Home Rule League.
5. Which session of the Congress was the first united Congress since 1907?

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## 8.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. The decision to partition Bengal was announced under the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon (1899-1905) on 16 October 1905.
2. The Muslim intelligentsia disliked the Swadeshi Movement as it was tied to the anti-partition agitation and had religious tone added to it.
3. Lord Carmichael was appointed as the first Governor of Bengal after the annulment of the partition of Bengal.
4. The objectives of Home Rule League were:

- Work for national education, social and political reforms.
  - Tilak linked up the question of swaraj with the demand for the formation of linguistic states and education in vernacular. He also used Home Rule to put an end to caste feeling among the common people and advocated abolition of untouchability.
5. The Lucknow Congress was the first united Congress since 1907.

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### 8.5 SUMMARY

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- The decision to implement the partition of Bengal was announced under the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon (1899-1905) on 16 October 1905. In the history of modern Bengal, this was recorded to be a very significant event.
- The administrative system of a province did not have adequate staff, which significantly affected trade, commerce and education. The provinces of east Bengal in particular suffered the most as they were cut off by rivers and streams. Inefficient administration also led to organized piracy in the waterways for almost a century.
- In 1903, the first proposal for the partition of Bengal was considered, mainly on the grounds of inefficient administration.
- The proposal would involve:
  - o The formation of an autonomous new province under the control of a Lieutenant Governor with a Legislative Council
  - o A self-governing revenue authority
  - o Transfer of a large territory that would validate an efficient administration
- From the very beginning, the partition was strongly opposed by some important administrators, the Indian and Bengali press, and also the British press and the Anglo-Indian press. The partition resulted in violent protests in west Bengal, which further stimulated the Indian nationalism.
- The partition was seen by the Indian National Congress as the government's 'divide and rule' policy.
- The students in Bengal, whether school or college, actively participated in the campaigns of Swadeshi and Boycott movements.
- In the beginning, the anti-partition movement was lawful and nonviolent but when it was unsuccessful in achieving the desired results, the movement attracted the participation of more militant leaders.
- In 1903, when the proposal for partition was published for the first time, it was strongly opposed by the Muslims. It was condemned



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by the weekly newspaper, *Moslem Chronicle*; political organization, the Central National Muhamedan Association; and Chowdhury Kazemuddin Ahmad Siddiky, the zamindar of the Baliadi estate in east Bengal, social worker and political personality of Bengal towards the end of the nineteenth century.

- Majority of the Muslims were in favour of the partition. The circumstances generated over the partition of Bengal further led to the establishment of the All India Muslim League in 1906, which supported the partition.
- The extremists were basically influenced by the emergence of the Irish Home Rule Movement under the leadership of Issac Butt. B.G. Tilak returned to active politics in 1914 after completing his term of imprisonment. He tried to join hands with the Congress on the issue of demanding 'Home Rule' for India.
- The main aim of the Home Rule League was to 'attain Home-Rule or self government within the British Empire by all constitutional means and to educate and organise public opinion in the country towards the attainment of the same'.
- Besant had set up a Home Rule League in London in 1914 and ultimately founded a Home Rule League on 15 September 1916.
- Tilak and Besant toured all over India and propagated the message of the Home Rule among the masses.
- The nationalists very soon realized that disunity among them was harming their cause and that they should put up a united front against the government.
- Most importantly, the two factions of the Congress were reunited. The old controversies were no longer relevant because most of the leaders realized that the split in the Congress had borne political inactivity.
- Further, the emerging tide of nationalism forced the old leaders to welcome Lokamanya Tilak and other militant nationalists back into the Congress.
- The War and the two Home Rule Leagues were generating a new sentiment in the country which changed the character of the Congress.
- This growing unity in the objectives of the Congress and the League culminated in the signing of the Congress–League Pact, popularly called the Lucknow Pact.
- The immediate effect of the developments at Lucknow was wonderful. The unity between the moderate and militant nationalists as well as between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League created immense political enthusiasm in the country.



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## 8.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Communalism:** It means to owe allegiance to one's own ethnic group rather than to the wider society.
- **Intelligentsia:** It refers to intellectuals or highly educated people as a group, especially when regarded as possessing culture and political influence.
- **Nefarious:** It means flagrantly wicked or impious.

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## 8.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short Answer Questions

1. What are the factors responsible for the partition of Bengal?
2. How was Bengal divided?
3. Discuss the features of the Lucknow Pact in 1916.
4. Write a short note on the Home Rule League movement.

### Long Answer Questions

1. What were the main objectives of the Home Rule League in India? Evaluate its significance for the cause of Indian freedom.
2. The travails of Bengal played a vital role in initiating the Indian nationalism. Explain.
3. Discuss the reaction and role of the Muslims in the partition of Bengal.

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## 8.8 FURTHER READINGS

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## UNIT 9 EMINENT PERSONALITIES IN FREEDOM STRUGGLE

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#### Structure

- 9.0 Introduction
- 9.1 Objectives
- 9.2 Tilak, Gokhale, Lala Lajpat Rai and V. O. Chidambaram
- 9.3 Impact of First World War
- 9.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 9.5 Summary
- 9.6 Key Words
- 9.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 9.8 Further Readings

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### 9.0 INTRODUCTION

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In the previous unit, you learnt about the partition of Bengal in 1905, as well as the Home Rule Movement. In this unit, we will discuss some of the famous personalities of the early phase of the Indian Freedom movement, that is, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and V. O. Chidambaram Pillai. The unit will also discuss the impact of the First World War on India.

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### 9.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the personalities of Tilak, Rai, Gokhale and Pillai
- Examine the outbreak of the First World War and its effects on Indian politics
- Describe the features and importance of the Government of India Act, 1919

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### 9.2 TILAK, GOKHALE, LALA LAJPAT RAI AND V. O. CHIDAMBARAM

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Let us begin by discussing Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

#### **Bal Gangadhar Tilak**

Bal Gangadhar Tilak can be considered the true founder of militant Nationalism in India. He was a Chitpavan Brahmin from Poona who criticized

the moderates in the Congress in his unique style—‘we will not achieve any success in our labours if we croak once a year like a frog’.

He was quick to set the political objective of India—‘Swaraj’ or self-government instead of reform in administration. He showed greater confidence and ability when he declared ‘Swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it’. For his strong advocacy of India’s freedom Tilak was imprisoned by the British government on charges of sedition thrice and was even sent to prison in Burma in 1908 for a period of six year. After coming back from Burma, he founded the All India Home Rule League.

Tilak was in many ways a pioneer in the Indian freedom movement.

- (i) Used religious symbols and festivals like Ganesh festival since 1894, to mobilize people.
- (ii) Used patriotic-cum-historical cult through Shivaji festival since 1896, to inspire the youth.
- (iii) Started no-revenue campaign in 1896-97, during severe famine in Maharashtra. He called upon the Government to take those measures of relief, which were provided under law in the Famine Relief Code. Then, through his paper, *Kesari*, he made an appeal to the people to refuse to pay taxes. He wrote angrily ‘can you not be bold even in the grip of death.’
- (iv) Started Boycott Movement on the issue of countervailing cotton exercise of 1896.

### **Lala Lajpat Rai**

Lala Lajpat Rai was another extremely prominent early nationalist leaders of the free struggle. Along with Bal Ganghadar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Rajpat Rai was part of the Indian triumvirate of ‘Lal Bal Pal’. Due to his fierce brand of patriotism and potent vocalism for India’s independence from Britain, he was given the moniker ‘Punjab Kesari’ or the ‘Lion of Punjab’. Along with his independence activities, Rai’s contribution is also noteworthy in other areas. He initiated the founding of the Punjab National Bank and also founded Hindu Orphan Relief Movement to keep the Christian missions from securing custody of these children.

When the British announced the setup of a constitutional reform commission, known as the Simon Commission, many nationalists including Rai were strongly opposed to it. While leading a protest against the commission, Rai was injured in a police lathicharge, and later succumbed to his injuries. Even though he was grievously injured, Rai subsequently addressed the protest and said, ‘I declare that the blows struck at me today will be the last nails in the coffin of British rule in India’.

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The young Indian revolutionary nationalist leaders from the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association such as Bhagat Singh and Chandrashekhar Azad, sought revenge against the English police officer responsible for hitting Rai with lathis during the protest.

### **Gopal Krishna Gokhale**

One of the most important leaders of the early years of the freedom struggle, Gopal Krishna Gokhale was one of the main leaders of the moderate faction of the Indian National Congress. Along with his role in securing greater rights for Indians, he was also an important leader attempted to social reforms. Being one of the first generation of Indians to receive college education, Gokhale was respected widely in the Indian intellectual community. He was founder of the Servants of India Society which was dedicated to inspire nationalistic feelings among his fellow countrymen. During his political career, Gokhale was in favour of reforms by working and co-operating with existing government institutions and machinery.

### **Vallinayagam Olaganathan Chidambaram Pillai**

Popularly known as the Tamil Helmsman, VO Chidambaram Pillai was a prominent freedom fighter from the state of Tamil Nadu. An exceptional organizer and someone who believed in employing all resources to rouse the people towards the freedom struggle, Pillai was one of the most famous students of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. He played the critical role in organizing the Swadeshi movement in southern India.

Pillai had entered politics during the ferment taking place in India after the 1905 Partition of Bengal. He was immediately drawn to the ideas of Tilak and Rai and enthusiastically took part in the Swadeshi movement. By 1906, Pillai won the support of merchants and industrialists in Turicorin and Tirunelveli for the idea of establishing a Swadeshi merchant shipping outfit by the name of the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company (SSNCo). In the process, he converted Tirunelveli district into a hotbed of intense nationalist politics—to the shock and anger of the British colonialists. The formal birth of the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company (SSNCo), on October 16, 1906, was largely the personal achievement of VOC. Meanwhile, VOC brought together leading commercial figures from Tirunelveli, Madurai and other centres in Tamil Nadu in order to place the Swadeshi shipping company on a firmer footing. Even prior to Gandhiji's Champaran Satyagraha, VOC took up the cause of the working class in Tamil Nadu, and thus he can be considered to be a forerunner to Mahatama Gandhi in this respect.

### **Check Your Progress**

1. Who can be considered the true founder of militant nationalism in India?
2. Who was one of the main leaders of the moderate faction of the Indian National Congress?

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## **9.3 IMPACT OF FIRST WORLD WAR**

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The First World War started in June 1914. France, Great Britain, Russia and Japan were on one side and Germany, Austria, Hungary and Turkey comprised the opposing side. Later, Italy also joined the former group. In the third world countries, this war awakened the spirit of nationalism among the masses.

When the war started, the Congress was dominated by the moderate faction led by Gokhale. The Congress took a decision to help the British considering it a duty. It decided to support the British thinking that after getting help from India, the British would feel grateful and would allow self-government in India. However, the Indian leaders at that time could not realize that the war between these groups was basically to safeguard their colonies. Nonetheless, the Congress did not support the British when Bal Gangadhar Tilak came back from jail. Tilak stated that pleading before the British for their rights did not serve any purpose. He maintained that freedom was the birth right of the Indians. Hence, he laid the foundation of the anti-government movement that was later led and guided by Gandhi.

Majority of the Indian leaders ultimately felt that the British government would not allow self-government in India if they were not pressurized for the same. Hence, they realized the requirement to start a mass movement. There were several other reasons behind the people's decision to start a mass movement. During the war period, heavy taxes were imposed on the people and the prices of essential goods also increased. Consequently, this period witnessed intense agitations against the policies of the British government.

When the First World War broke out in the year 1914, India was also going through a state of growing political turbulence. The Indian National Congress was no longer a group that met and discussed issues in political conferences. Slowly, it was demanding self-governance from the British. The Germans, before the breakout of the War, had made efforts to stir up an anti-British sentiment in India. The Germans believed that if the British faced heat in India, their chances of victory in the War would be significantly reduced. William Archer wrote of the moment: 'The moment Britain gets into trouble elsewhere, India, in her present temper, would burst into a blaze of rebellion.'

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These fears were, however, unfounded. When the War was declared on August 4, 1914, India rallied behind the cause of the British and supported it in the War. The influential section of the country believed that the independence of India was in the hands of the British and thus, the country should support the colonizers in whatever capacity it could. Financial and military help was offered to the British from all over the country. Wealthy states offered huge sums of money. States outside of the British control too pitched in to help – Nepal, for instance, sent 100,000 of its Gurkha soldiers while the Dalai Lama in Tibet provided 1000 of his troops in support of the British. Despite its initial fears of unrest, at the time of the War the British Army was able to handle large groups of troops and take out most of its military equipment from India as people supported the British and brought down the fear of unrest within the country. The Indian troops, in fact, were battle-ready much before the War and before the troops of other dominions.

By the winter of 1914, Indian troops were placed in the Western Front and participated in the first Battle of Ypres. The troops suffered many casualties by the end of 1915. During this time, it was decided to withdraw the Indian Corps from the frontline duty due to large-scale casualties from battles and sickness.

While one and a half million Indian volunteered to fight for the British, nearly 800,000 Indian troops participated in all battles held in the War. Indian troops bravely fought across many countries, including Gallipoli and North and East Africa. By the end of the War, a total of 47,746 Indian troops were registered as killed or missing and 65,000 were wounded. For its valour, the Indian Corps was given 13,000 medals for gallantry, including 12 Victoria Crosses. The Corps' first Victoria Cross was won by Khudadad Khan.

As with all wars, the cost of this war too took a toll on the Indian economy and it was pushed to the brink of bankruptcy. Yet, the British establishment was surprised with the support it received from the Indians. The Times noted at the time: 'The Indian empire has overwhelmed the British nation by the completeness and unanimity of its enthusiastic aid.'

As mentioned above, the Indians had provided support believing that it would be rewarded by the British in return with a significant move towards independence or at the least self-governance. It was soon apparent that the British held no such intentions. With this, the mood among the Indian political class and the masses soon turned antagonistic and even revolutionary towards the British. At the time when the War was in its final stages, Mahatma Gandhi retorted: 'Seek ye first the recruiting office, and everything will be added unto you'. Thus, the British government's post-war lack of support to the cause of the Indian independence alienated leaders like Gandhi and gave a great stimulus to the national movement. After the First World War ended, the British introduced some reforms to pacify sentiments in India based on

the Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms. As a result, the Government of India Act was finally introduced in the year 1919.

Its main features were:

- It introduced a national parliament for India having two houses.
- Around 5 million of the wealthiest upper class Indians were provided the right to vote (a very small percentage of the total population).
- In the provincial governments, the Indian national were entitled to become the ministers of education, health and public works.
- The act had the provisions for a commission to be held in 1929, to find out if India was ready for more concessions/reforms.

Nonetheless, the British still controlled all the central government portfolios and even within the provincial governments they controlled the key positions of tax and law and order. Many Indians felt that they had been severely let down by the British government for their support provided during World War I. But despite such feelings of being let down, India still played a major part in World War II as well.

The Government of India Act, 1919, was passed to increase the participation of Indians in the Government of India. The Act included the reforms which were suggested in the report of the Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu, and the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford.

Some of the features of the Act are as follows:

- (i) Preamble:** The preamble of the Government of India Act includes the principles and policies which laid the foundation of this Act. The Preamble suggested a decentralized unitary form of government.

The policy of the British Parliament was:

- (a) To provide for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of Indian administration
- (b) To develop self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the empire
- (c) The time and manner of gradual advance towards this goal to be decided by the British Parliament

- (ii) Distribution of functions of government:** The functions of the government were divided into two categories: central functions and provincial functions. The provincial subjects were subdivided into ‘transferred’ and ‘reserved’. It was decided that the ministers who were accountable to the legislature would assist the Governors in the transferred subjects. On the other hand, the Councillors who were not accountable to the legislature, were

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to advise the Governors in the reserved subjects. Thus, the dual set of governments were introduced in the provinces namely accountable and non-accountable.

- (iii) Powers of Governor-General:** The Central Legislature was given the authority to consider, pass or reject legislation on any subject which was mentioned in the Central List. However, the authority of the final decision on any Bill passed by the Legislature was in the hands of the Governor-General. He had the authority to stop consideration of any Bill or a part of a Bill, if he believed that it might be dangerous for the peace of the country. He also had the power not to allow debate or adjournment motion on some issues, in the legislature.

The Governor-General also had the authority to hold back his agreement on any Bill. No Bill could become an Act without his agreement. Moreover, he also had a power to enact a law which he believed was important for the peace and safety of the country, even if the Legislature did not pass it.

- (iv) Division of members:** In this Act, the members were divided into three categories: elected, nominated officials and nominated non-officials and they had 70 per cent, 10 per cent and 20 per cent members respectively.
- (v) The voting qualifications:** According to this Act, the voting qualification varied in different provinces. Moreover, within the same province, the voting qualifications were different based on whether the area was rural or urban. There were two categories of constituencies namely general and special. The general constituency included Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Anglo-Indians and Sikhs, etc. Special constituencies represented land holders, universities, chambers of commerce etc.
- (vi) Two types of legislature:** According to this Act, legislature was categorized into two types namely the Council of States and the Central Legislative Assembly. The Council of States had 60 members, out of which 33 were elected and 27 were nominated. The Central Legislature Assembly had 145 members, out of which 104 were elected and 41 were nominated.
- (vii) Provincial legislatures and its powers:** The number of seats of provincial legislatures varied from province to province. The provincial legislative councils had the authority to legislate on the topics which were listed under provincial subjects. The Governor had the authority not to consider a Bill. If he considered the Bill dangerous for the peace and safety of the province, he had the authority to send the Bill back to the House for reconsideration.

In some cases, he could keep the Bill to send to the Governor-General for his opinion. The Governor-General was empowered to reserve the Bill to take the opinion of the Crown.

**(viii) Executive Council of the Governor-General:** This Council was not accountable to the Central Legislature rather it was accountable to the Secretary of State. There was no limit on the membership of the Executive Council of the Governor-General. Three members out of the six members of the Executive Council of the Governor-General were to be Indians. A pleader who pleaded in the Indian High Court was also eligible to become a law member.

**(ix) Powers of the Secretary of State for India:** Earlier the Secretary of the State for India had a lot of authority over the central and provincial administration. However, with the enactment of this, his powers were reduced.

### **Importance of the Act**

Many prominent leaders of the time observed that the Act of 1919 was important as it was more comprehensive than any other Act enacted before. This Act introduced direct election and increased the franchise. After the enactment of this Act, Indian ministers for the first time, could handle some of the departments of provincial administration not merely as official nominees but as the leaders of the elected majorities. These ministers were responsible to the people. It gave an opportunity to the people to take first-hand experience in politics.

However, even though the Act had some commendable features, it was defective in many ways. Dr. A K. Heith said ‘the executive remained wholly free from direct authority of the legislature’.

The subjects which the Indian leaders were given to handle were not important from the point of view of politics. The system that came into being after this Act did not improve the efficiency of administration.

The ministers felt that they did not have enough authority to carry out their responsibility. Sir K. V. Reddy said, ‘I was minister for Development without the Forest. I was the minister for Agriculture minus irrigation.’ The Moderates accepted the Act as they took this Act as a first step towards self-government. The Nationalist party did not accept the Act as they considered inadequate, disappointing and unsatisfactory.

With the outbreak of World War I, there was great enthusiasm in the country. The people of India were willing to serve the government in every possible way. After Marne, there was an increasing demand for Indian troops outside India. When Turkey joined the Central Powers in October 1914, Indian troops garrisoned the Suez Canal and repulsed a Turkish attack. Indian troops

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fought through the long campaigns of Macedonia and German East Africa. They played an important part in the Iraq campaign leading to the capture of Baghdad in 1917. In this way, they helped to found the present State of Iraq. They were in the Allied army which took Jerusalem in 1917. All this involved a great effort in India itself. Eight lakhs of men were recruited for the fighting forces, together with four lakhs of non-combatants. This resulted in great expansion in the military machine, a great mixture of classes and a stronger feeling of self-confidence all around. Indian self-confidence grew when the magnitude of their effort and the extent to which it depended upon Indians themselves, were realized.

In the administrative sphere, the British government made a mistake in allowing the British civilian officers to serve the forces during the war. Many of them never returned and those who returned found themselves in a strange new mental world to which it was difficult to adapt themselves. When times grew difficult towards the end of the war, the Government had only an ageing and tired cadre of officers to rely upon.

In the economic sphere, the first effect of the war was one of stimulus. The industrial development of modern India owes a good deal to the demands of World War I. However, increasing demands and expenditure led to rise in prices and ultimately enthusiasm was turned into discontent. Englishmen could be expected to put up with inconveniences because they felt that they were fighting for their very existence and their victory was likely to add to their glory. The same could not be said about the Indians for whom the war was merely an external affliction. No doubt, they became not only exhausted and war-weary but also sour, discontented and resentful.

The attitude of India towards Europeans and its people was altered radically and permanently. The Indians gave up the feeling that the Europeans were superior to them morally and technically. They were regarded merely as more powerful. The first war casualty in India was the image of Western superiority.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 also had a profound influence on the mind of the Indians. They felt that if the people of Russia could overthrow an imperialist regime, the same could be done by the Indians in their own country. The Fourteen points of President Wilson had great influence on the Indians. They also demanded the rights of national freedom and self-determination of people. No wonder, the Indians demanded self-government in the name of the fundamental principles accepted by the Allied Powers.

As regards the effect of war on Muslims, they were very unhappy. They did not approve of the dismemberment of Turkey, which was regarded as the sword of Islam. They also did not like the treatment given to the Arabs who were considered to be rebels against the Turkish Khalifa. Their princes were regarded as stooges of the infidel.

When the war started, the Congress was still a middle-class body of westernized professionals with some commercial and industrial backing. It was firmly under the control of Gokhale and the Moderates. However, all this was changed during the war. Tilak came back from jail and became the all-important leader of all-India. Tilak was opposed to the old policy of making prayers to the British Government. His contention was that every Indian had the birth right to be free. He laid the foundations for the great anti-government movement led by Gandhiji in the next few years.

## NOTES

### Check Your Progress

3. When did the First World War begin?
4. List one defect of the Government of India Act, 1919.

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## 9.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. Bal Gangadhar Tilak can be considered the true founder of militant nationalism.
2. Gopal Krishna Gokhale was one of the main leaders of the moderate faction of the Indian National Congress.
3. The First World War started in June 1914. France, Great Britain, Russia and Japan were on one side and Germany, Austria, Hungary and Turkey comprised the opposing side.
4. The Government of India Act, 1919, was defective in many ways. According to Dr. A K. Heith, through the act, 'the executive remained wholly free from direct authority of the legislature'.

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## 9.5 SUMMARY

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- Bal Gangadhar Tilak can be considered the true founder of militant Nationalism in India.
- Tilak was in many ways a pioneer in the Indian freedom movement. He used religious symbols and festivals like Ganesh festival since 1894, to mobilize people.
- Along with Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Rajpat Rai was part of the Indian triumvirate of 'Lal Bal Pal'.
- Due to his fierce brand of patriotism and potent vocalism for India's independence from Britain, Rai was given the moniker 'Punjab Kesari' or the 'Lion of Punjab'.

## NOTES

- Gopal Krishna Gokhale was one of the main leaders of the moderate faction of the Indian National Congress.
- Along with his role in securing greater rights for Indians, Gokhale was also an important leader attempted to social reforms.
- Popularly known as the Tamil Helmsman, VO Chidambaram Pillai was a prominent freedom fighter from the state of Tamil Nadu.
- An exceptional organizer and someone who believed in employing all resources to rouse the people towards the freedom struggle, Pillai was one of the most famous students of Bal Gangadhar Tilak.
- The First World War started in June 1914. France, Great Britain, Russia and Japan were on one side and Germany, Austria, Hungary and Turkey comprised the opposing side. Later, Italy also joined the former group. In the third world countries, this war awakened the spirit of nationalism among the masses.
- When the War was declared on August 4, 1914, India rallied behind the cause of the British and supported it in the War. The influential section of the country believed that the independence of India was in the hands of the British and thus, the country should support the colonizers in whatever capacity it could.
- After the First World War ended, the British introduced some reforms to pacify sentiments in India based on the Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms. As a result, the Government of India Act was finally introduced in the year 1919.
- The Government of India Act, 1919, introduced a national parliament for India having two houses.
- Many prominent leaders of the time observed that the Act of 1919 was important as it was more comprehensive than any other Act enacted before. This Act introduced direct election and increased the franchise.
- The Russian Revolution of 1917 also had a profound influence on the minds of the Indians. They felt that if the people of Russia could overthrow an imperialist regime, the same could be done by the Indians in their own country.

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## 9.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Birth Right:** It means a natural or moral right, possessed by everyone.
- **Bankruptcy:** It means being unable to repay debts.
- **Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms:** They were reforms introduced by the British colonial government in India to introduce self-governing institutions gradually to India.

- **Khalifa:** It is a name or title which means ‘successor’, ‘deputy’ or ‘steward’. It most commonly refers to the leader of a Caliphate, but is also used as a title among various Islamic religious groups and orders.

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## 9.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short Answer Questions

1. How was Bal Gangadhar Tilak a pioneer in the Indian freedom movement?
2. Write a short-note on the activities of Vallinayagam Olganathan Chidambaram Pillai.

### Long Answer Questions

1. Discuss in detail the effects of the First World War on India.
2. Examine the features of the Government of India Act, 1919. What was the Act important? What were its defects?

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## 9.8 FURTHER READINGS

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## NOTES

**NOTES**

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**BLOCK – IV**  
**THE SECOND PHASE OF INDIAN NATIONAL  
MOVEMENT (1919 – 1947)**

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**UNIT 10 THE SECOND PHASE  
OF THE FREEDOM  
STRUGGLE**

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**Structure**

- 10.0 Introduction
- 10.1 Objectives
- 10.2 Jallianwala Bagh Tragedy
- 10.3 Non-Cooperation Movement
- 10.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 10.5 Summary
- 10.6 Key Words
- 10.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 10.8 Further Readings

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**10.0 INTRODUCTION**

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The second phase of the Indian Freedom Movement is synonymous with Mahatma Gandhi. It was he who changed the freedom struggle from largely middle class led movement into movement of the masses. Gandhi is considered as one of the greatest statesmen who fought for India's independence. He was regarded as the 'Father of the Nation'.

Born in a middle class Bania family in a vague princely state in a corner of India, he was an average student, introvert and nervous. He could not gather the courage to speak in public. Though his first attempt as a legal practitioner failed miserably yet he was a man with extraordinary sincerity, rectitude and honesty. He innovated Satyagraha movement which played a very significant role in India's struggle for freedom. He actively led the Champaran and Kheda Satyagraha in India. He was shocked at the passage of Rowlatt Act which led to the brutal incident of Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. The first all-India mass movement led by him was the non-cooperation movement. We will study the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre and the non-cooperation movement in this unit.



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## 10.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre
- Examine the non-cooperation movement in detail

## NOTES

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## 10.2 JALLIANWALA BAGH TRAGEDY

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The history of pre-Independent India is sated with unauthorized and high handed Acts which have seriously eroded the Indian national movement. The Defence of India Act of 1858 which was also known as Act for the Good Government of India was amended at the time of the First World War to facilitate the State to keep in custody a citizen preventively. In the year 1917, a sedition committee was appointed with British Judge Sir Sidney Rowlatt, as its President known as Rowlatt Committee. The committee submitted its report in the year 1918 on 25th April. According to this report, 'the revolutionary movement in Bombay was confined to mostly Chitpavan Brahmins. In Bengal the conspirators were young men belonging to the educated middle class who committed a long series of murders and robberies. In the Punjab outrages were largely due to the emigrants (Ghadr Party) returned from abroad. In other provinces of India the movement had not taken its roots'. This committee was to look into the criminal conspiracies related to the revolutionary movement in India. Other members were Chief Justice of Bombay, Sir Basil Scoot, member of Bengal civil service, JDV Hodge, Member (Judge of Madras High Court), C.V. Kumaraswami Sastri, Member of Board of Revenue for United Province, Verney Lovett, Member of Bengal Legislative Council, P. C. Mitter.

As a result, the following recommendations were provided by the Committee:

- It authorized the government to put any individual behind the bars on the basis of suspicions regarding terrorism, without trial, for a maximum period of two years.
- The act makes available speedy trial of the transgression by a special cell that consisted of three High Court Judges.
- No court of appeal above that panel. This panel could also accept the evidences which were not even acceptable in the Indian Evidences Act.

The bill aggravated of ferocious annoyance and antipathy throughout India. The act was condemned with a popular cry '*no vakil, no dalil, no appeal*'. It was unanimously opposed by Indians from all spheres of life. The Bill was criticized in various public meetings by the erudite people of India.

## NOTES

Surendranath Banerjee regarded the bill as a great peril to civic liberty. M.A. Jinnah warned that 'by passing the bill you will create in this country from one end to other, a discontent and agitation the like of which you have not witnessed'. Various newspapers like *The Hindu* and *Amrita Bazar Patrika* called this Bill as a shameful gigantic blunder against the peaceful law abiding people. The people regarded this Act as an attempt on the part of a bureaucracy which has been disheartened by the exercise of uncontrolled power to hinder with liberty. On the basis of this Report, The Government of India prepared two Rowlatt Bills (Indian Criminal Law Amendment Bill No 1 of 1919 and Criminal Law Emergency Bill No 2 of 1919) and moved them in the Indian Legislative Council. After the passage of the Bill Malaviya, Jinnah and Mazahar Ul Haq tendered their resignation from the Council. At this juncture Gandhi launched the Satyagraha Movement at the large scale which was spontaneous and phenomenal. It stimulated a chain of strikes and conferences throughout the country. The social discontentment got wider circulation in United Provinces, Delhi, Calcutta, Lahore, Amritsar, etc. Though this movement was widespread, it found its momentum in the soil of Punjab.

The people of Punjab received the grave blow of this movement. The Civil authorities handed over the Punjab to the martial forces. Being themselves caught up by the crowd phenomenon of avenging sentiments on the murdering of the European and Englishmen, Brigadier Dyer and his troops showed akin crowd behaviour by firing at the peaceful public meeting at Jallianwala Bagh killing more than four hundred people and wounding thousands of the people be it men, women or children.

The protest in Amritsar was regarding their demand to liberate the two renowned leaders of the national movement, Dr. Satya Pal and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew who had been earlier arrested by the government and moved to an underground place. The hartals and movements took an ugly turn in Amritsar. On 10th April the crowd set the fire at the National Bank and killed its European manager. At other places also the mob violence led to the death of five Englishmen and the destruction of railway goods shed and government buildings. Brigadier Dyer took in charge of the city and issued a Proclamation that if any meetings were held then they will have to face dire consequences. He decided to put Punjab under Martial Law. On 12th April, a meeting was held at the Hindu College. In this meeting Hans Raj, an assistant to Dr. Kitchlew, declared that a public protest meeting would be held the very next day in the Jallianwala Bagh, to be organised by a Dr. Muhammad Bashir and presided over by a senior and esteemed Congress Party leader, Lal Kanhyalal Bhatia. As planned the very next day by mid-afternoon on 13th April thousands of Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus assembled in the Jallianwala Bagh (garden) near the Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar. Brigadier Dyer arrived at the Bagh after an hour with the Gurkha soldiers. He had also brought two

unbreakable cars armed with machine guns; however, the vehicles were left outside, as they were incapable to penetrate the Bagh through the narrow passage. It was surrounded on all sides by buildings and houses. It had few narrow passages. Most of them were kept locked permanently. The main entrance was comparatively broad, but was protected heavily by the troops backed by the armoured vehicles. Dyer—without warning ordered his troops to begin indiscriminate shooting towards the crowd. The crowd ran in terror in all the directions. Firing continued for about ten minutes. Cease-fire was ordered only when grenades supplies were almost worn out.

After the Jallianwala Bagh massacre the proclamation of the Martial law was pertinent in Amritsar, Gujranwala, Sheikhpura and Kasur. Various atrocities were committed by the British government like flogging in the public, cutting down of water and electricity supply, asking the Indians to crawl on their belly to the ground, etc. To protest against the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy Rabindranath Tagore surrendered the knighthood bestowed on him by the British Government. The former President of INC Sir Sankaran Nair resigned his membership from the Viceroy's Executive Council. The Jallianwala Tragedy brought about the radical changes in the Indian political situation.

## NOTES

### Check Your Progress

1. What is the other name for the Defense of India Act?
2. What were the various atrocities committed by the British during Jallianwala Bagh Massacre?

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## 10.3 NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT

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Great turbulence existed in India during the last year of First World War. The Rowlatt Act, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the Martial Law clamped in the Punjab, breakdown of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms which were pronounced towards the end of 1918 and the dismemberment of Turkey by the British following the Treaty of Sevres in May 1920, created extensive antipathy among all the sections of the people of India. Gandhi surrendered his Kaisra-e-Hind Gold medal. On the suggestions of Mahatma Gandhi a programme of non-cooperation was collectively accepted by the All Party Conference held at Allahabad on 9 June 1920. As per the resolution of this Conference, a decree supporting the programme of non-cooperation was passed in the special session the Congress at Kolkata in September under the Presidentship of Lala Lajpat Rai. A large number of Muslims also attended this session. Gandhi moved the resolution. Ali brothers and Pandit Motilal Nehru supported it. C. R. Das, Annie Besant and Pandit Madan Mohan

## NOTES

Malviya opposed it. The same was adopted in the plenary session at Nagpur in December of the same year.

The word 'non-cooperation' was innovative, but the inspiration came from two sources. David Thoreau had protested against the arrangement of slavery in America and had repudiated to pay his taxes. His approach was ethical. The Irish Sinn Fein Movement has also practiced non-cooperation from the law courts.

Before 1920 the aim of the Congress was to accomplish self-governance by constitutional and lawful means. The new aim of the Congress was attainment of Swaraj by justifiable and nonviolent means. A four anna membership was commenced so that more and more deprived people could join the Congress. A chain of command was created i.e. village level, taluka level and district level committees were created so that Congress reaches to the grassroots. The Provincial Congress Committees was reorganized on linguistic basis. The perception was to bring it close to the masses by using the dialect languages. The numbers of delegates were to be fixed in proportion to the population.

It was a nationwide widespread mass movement. The year 1921-22 observed an unprecedented movement in the nation's history, when there was a widespread turmoil among students. Non-alignment movement spread all over India: A nationwide expedition was taken up by Mahatma Gandhi and Ali Brothers of Khilafat movement Vallabhai Patel, C R Das. M.R Jayakar, T. Prakasam, Saifuddin Kitchlew (Punjab), Moti Lal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari, and Asaf Ali left their legal profession and jumped in the full-fledged political affairs of Congress. Many of the students had left government schools and colleges and joined the movement.

Maulana Mehrnud Hasan laid the foundation stone of Jamia Millia Islamia at Aligarh in the year 1920 on 29 October during the meeting of the Foundation Committee of Jamia Millia Islamia. Simultaneously, Bihar Vidyapeeth, Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Bengal Vidyapeeth and National College of Lahore also came into existence. In some provinces such as Bengal and Punjab, there was a complete boycott of education by the foreign rule. The shops which sold foreign clothes were picketed. Charka and Khadi became the icon of national movement. In Bengal, the anti-indigo cultivation by the peasants was led by Someshwar Prasad Chaudhary. Whereas, the peasants of Midnapur (Bengal) led by Birendranath Sasmal geared up for a very effectual no-tax movement. People of different parts of the country blissfully joined the no-tax to Government movement. It was victorious in the Andhra region.

The Tana-Bhagat cult of Chhota Nagpur tribal's (Bihar) boycotted the liquor. Akali Movement in Punjab also got linked up with the non-cooperation movement. The Sikhs formed Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) on 13 December 1920 to secure Sikh Gurdwaras from corrupt priests

and as a result Akali Dal was formed. The well-known founders were Kartar Singh Jabbar, Master Tara Singh and Baba Kharak Singh.

The non-cooperation movement was frail in the Bombay Presidency, where, the people were grieving on the death of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. In Andhra Pradesh, Alluri Sitaram Raju organized the tribals and linked with the non-cooperation movement. In the Vijaywada session on March 1921 the Congress members were directed to accumulate funds, register more and more members into the party and to give out the Charkhas. Khilafat Conference was called in Karachi on 21 July 1921. In this conference, Maulana Mohammad Ali commenced a resolution that Muslims will not serve in the British Indian army. As a result, Ali brothers were under arrest for treason.

During this time the parallel government came into the picture in the form of Volunteer Corps. The Government of India declared them as an illegal organization under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, as a result large number of volunteers, students and nationalist leaders were arrested. Looking into the political situation of the country Gandhi wrote a letter to Viceroy Lord Reading to lift a ban on the civil liberties and release the political prisoners but to no avail.

The people were advised to:

- Surrender their titles and honorary offices and resignation from the designated posts in the local bodies.
- Denial to attend Government duties, darbars and other official and semi-official functions held by governmental officials or in their honour.
- Boycott of foreign goods
- Withdrawal of children from schools and colleges and the establishment of national schools and colleges in various provinces.
- Boycott of the elections to be held for councils as per the reforms of 1919.

Prince of Wales visited India on November 1921; he was welcomed with hartals and political meetings marred by panorama of mob violence and police atrocities in Bombay. Congress leaders like C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru was arrested. Lawyers left their job, students boycotted the colleges, liquor and foreign shops were picketed. Mahatma Gandhi gave the slogan of 'Swaraj in one year'. Non-cooperators were mercilessly beaten and their meetings were dispersed with force. Around twenty five thousand people were put behind the bars. Mahatma Gandhi gave a seven days of ultimatum to the then Governor General that if the political prisoners are not released then he will start the Civil Disobedience Movement. However a fatal incident of Chauri Chaura took place. In this incident the mob of three thousand people killed 22 policemen and burnt down the police station at Chauri Chaura, a place

## NOTES

## NOTES

near Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. Gandhi was disheartened and as a result he called off the non-cooperation movement. He was bitterly been criticized by Lala Lajpat Rai, Subash Chandra Bose, Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das. Gandhiji was arrested and put behind the bars and was awarded a sentence of six years of imprisonment. Later he was released on health grounds.

### Check Your Progress

3. When did the prince of Whales visit India?
4. Who laid the foundation of Jamia Milia Islamia in Aligarh?

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## 10.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. The Defence of India Act of 1858 was also known as Act for the Good Government of India.
2. After the Jalianwala Bagh massacre the proclamation of the Martial law was pertinent in Amritsar, Gujranwala, Sheikhpura and Kasur. Various atrocities were committed by the British government like flogging in the public, cutting down of water and electricity supply, asking the Indians to crawl on their belly to the ground, etc.
3. The Prince of Wales visited India on November 1921.
4. Maulana Mehrnud Hasan laid the foundation stone of Jamia Millia Islamia at Aligarh.

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## 10.5 SUMMARY

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- In the year 1917, a sedition committee was appointed with British Judge Sir Sidney Rowlatt, as its President known as Rowlatt Committee.
- The act was condemned with a popular cry 'no wakil, no dalil, no appeal'.
- The protest in Amritsar was regarding their demand to liberate the two renowned leaders of the national movement, Dr. Satya Pal and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew who had been earlier arrested by the government and moved to an underground place.
- Jallianwalla Massacre was the result of the revolt against the Rowlatt Act.
- After the Jallianwala Bagh massacre the proclamation of the Martial law was pertinent in Amritsar, Gujranwala, Sheikhpura and Kasur.



- Great turbulence existed in India during the last year of First World War. The Rowlatt Act, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the Martial Law clamped in the Punjab, breakdown of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms which were pronounced towards the end of 1918 and the dismemberment of Turkey by the British following the Treaty of Sevres in May 1920, created extensive antipathy among all the sections of the people of India.
- On the suggestions of Mahatma Gandhi a programme of non-cooperation was collectively accepted by the All Party Conference held at Allahabad on 9 June 1920.
- Before 1920 the aim of the Congress was to accomplish self-governance by constitutional and lawful means. The new aim of the Congress was attainment of Swaraj by justifiable and nonviolent means.
- It was a nationwide widespread mass movement. The year 1921-22 observed an unprecedented movement in the nation's history, when there was a widespread turmoil among students.
- A fatal incident of Chauri Chaura took place. In this incident the mob of three thousand people killed 22 policemen and burnt down the police station at Chauri Chaura, a place near Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. Gandhi was disheartened and as a result he called off the non-cooperation movement.

## NOTES

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### 10.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Martial Law:** It is the imposition of direct military control of normal civilian functions of government, especially in response to a temporary emergency such as invasion or major disaster, or in an occupied territory.
- **Atrocities:** It means extremely wicked or cruel acts, typically one involving physical violence or injury.
- **Hartals:** It refers to the closure of shops and offices as a protest or a mark of sorrow.

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### 10.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short Answer Questions

1. List the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee
2. What were the reasons that led to the Jalianwala Bagh Massacre?



**NOTES**

**Long Answer Questions**

1. Describe the non-cooperation movement in detail.
2. The people of Punjab received the grave blow of the movement against the Rowlatt Act. Discuss.

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**10.8 FURTHER READINGS**

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# UNIT 11 THE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT

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*The Civil Disobedience  
Movement*

## NOTES

### Structure

- 11.0 Introduction
- 11.1 Objectives
- 11.2 The Swarajists
- 11.3 The Civil Disobedience Movement
- 11.4 The Second World War
- 11.5 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 11.6 Summary
- 11.7 Key Words
- 11.8 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 11.9 Further Readings

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## 11.0 INTRODUCTION

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As you have learnt, during the First World War, Indians supported and cooperated with the British and their Allies against the Central powers, and a large number of Indians lost their lives. They had hoped that in return, the British would agree to their demand for granting a Dominion status to India after the war.

After the end of the War, in response to the demand for Swaraj and Dominion status, the British introduced another set of reforms – the Government of India Act of 1919, also known as the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms. The reforms did little to meet the aspirations of Indians, who felt short-changed after fighting alongside the British in the War. They were not ready to settle for anything less than self-rule, or Swaraj. People's anger, disgust and discontent with the British spilled over in the form of violence and demonstrations all over the country. To suppress the volatile situation, the British passed the Rowlatt Act in 1919, giving the government power to arrest and detain people in jail without trial. The situation culminated in the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy of 13 April 1919, in which General Dyer ordered indiscriminate firing on unarmed protestors in an enclosed ground near the Golden Temple, Amritsar. The victims had gathered to protest peacefully against the British government's excesses against Indians. In one of the most heinous acts by the British in India, hundreds were killed, including men, women and children. In response, under the leadership of Gandhi, the Indian National Congress launched mass movements in all areas of the country. We have already studied about the non-cooperation movement in the previous unit. In this unit, we will study the civil disobedience movement.

## NOTES

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### 11.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Examine the civil disobedience movement in detail
- Discuss the Swarajist movement in the Indian National Congress
- Explain the impact of The Second World War on India

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### 11.2 THE SWARAJISTS

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The first major Gandhian movement all over India was the Non-Cooperation Movement from 1920 to 1922. The movement was withdrawn in 1922 by Gandhi in view of the rise of violence among its followers. After the termination of the movement his followers were agitated over the future course of action. Leaders like C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru thought that, as there was no immediate chance of resuming the struggle, an alternative strategy was called for. That strategy was Council entry. This would require Congressmen to contest election and appeal to the voters, that is, the common Indians. At the same time they would not accept ministerial offices that were created through the scheme of diarchy which had been rejected by the Congress. This group called themselves the Swarajists Congress Party. They aimed at thwarting the government plan for diarchy.

Until 1923, the Councils were dominated by the Liberals who had walked out of the Congress at the beginning of the Non-Cooperation Movement. When the Swarajists fought elections, those Liberals were defeated all over the country. The Government of India Act, 1919, therefore, failed to work. This hastened the appointment of the Simon Commission in 1928 for working out a more acceptable scheme of reforms for India.

#### Check Your Progress

1. Name two Swarajist leaders.
2. Who did the Swarajists defeat in the elections?

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### 11.3 THE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT

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Soon after he was given the responsibility of the Civil Disobedience Movement, Gandhi wrote a letter to Viceroy Irwin seeking the abolishment of salt tax, reduction of military expenditure and the release of political prisoners. However, Lord Irwin chose to not respond to this letter. This formed the crux for the outbreak of the Civil Disobedience Movement against the British by Gandhi. On 12 March, 1930, Gandhi started a march from

Sabarmati ashram to the sea at Dandi accompanied by 72 followers. People cheered the marchers and joined them along the way. As Gandhi walked past them, villagers spun yarn on charkhas as a mark of their solidarity to the movement. On April 6, after Gandhi reached the sea at Dandi, he picked up some salt from the seaside as a mark of breaking the Salt Law. Gandhi had decided to break the law as he believed that salt was a basic necessity of people and salt tax was against the interest of the poor. Inspired by Gandhi, people began manufacturing salt all over the country.

From Madras to Maharashtra, from Bengal and Assam to Karachi, volunteers were recruited on a large-scale for the movement through careful planning and it soon spread like fire. Supporters launched a massive demonstration at Peshawar in the farthest north. This area had been in news due to activism by leaders like Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgars. The British were wary of the movement and arrested leaders, including Jawaharlal Nehru on April 14. Madras, Calcutta and Karachi erupted in protest against the arrest of Nehru. The colonial government was taken by surprise with the reaction of the masses as it had not anticipated such widespread support to the movement. Insecure, it decided to arrest Gandhi in May 1930 but the decision only added much fuel to the fire that the movement had stirred. The most important feature of the Civil Disobedience Movement was the support it received from the youth of the country, especially students and women. Women led groups attacked liquor shops as well as those that sold foreign goods. The government went all out to stop the people and issued orders curbing the civil liberties of citizens. It also decided to ban civil disobedience organizations in the provinces.

In June 1930, the Congress Working Committee was banned and its president, Motilal Nehru, was arrested. By August, even the local Congress committees were banned. All these issues became part of the Civil Disobedience Movement. It was then that the Simon Commission published its report, a time when the government had become a symbol of repression and the national movement was at its peak.

As against expectations, the Simon Report made no mention of giving dominion status to India. With this, many nationalist leaders turned outright against the British. It was followed by the Viceroy's invitation to the leaders to a Round Table Conference to discuss the issue of dominion status. Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru were taken to Gandhi to discuss the offer made by the British. But no breakthrough could be made between the government and the Congress leaders. It was in London in November 1930 that the First Round Table Conference was held between the Indian leaders and the British. However, leaders of the Congress abstained from the meeting. The absence of the leaders of the Congress meant that there would be no negotiations between the Indians and the British. The next conference was scheduled a year later. On 25 January, 1931, the government released Gandhi. Without imposing any

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conditions, all other members of the Congress Working Committee were also released. However, the Congress leaders were asked to discuss the Viceroy's offer to participate in the next Round Table Conference. After several rounds of discussions, Gandhi was given the responsibility of negotiating with the Viceroy. Discussions between Gandhi and Lord Irwin went on for a fortnight. On March 5, 1931, the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was finally signed. The terms of this Pact were as follows:

- Immediate release of all people arrested for non-violent protests.
- Fines not collected from people to be remitted
- Confiscated land not yet sold off to be returned to peasants
- Government employees who had resigned were to be treated leniently
- Right to make salt to villages along the coast
- Grant of right to peaceful and non-aggressive picketing

The Congress decided to withdraw the Civil Disobedience Movement after the pact was signed. It also confirmed its participation in the next Round Table Conference. However, as per the judgment of many nationalist leaders, this pact was only a temporary truce, even though another section of leaders believed this settlement unnecessary. Due to this difference of opinion, activists launched numerous radical activities in the form of revolutionary secret societies.

In its Karachi session in March 1931, the Congress once again gave the call for purna swaraj. However, the party also supported the pact between Irwin and Gandhi. At Karachi, the Congress started preparing the framework of India's Constitution even though the Pact made no mention of giving independence to India. Resolutions related to the Fundamental Rights and National Economic policy were approved at the session. These resolutions were landmark in the history of the nationalist movement for it was for the first time that issues of civil liberties such as free speech, free press and freedom of association were spoken about for the Indian masses. Other provisions included in this resolution pertained to neutrality in religious matters, equality before law, universal adult franchise, free and compulsory primary education and many others.

For the Second Round Table Conference in August 1931, Gandhi travelled to London. Willington, meanwhile, replaced Lord Irwin. However, the discussions at this Round Table did not go in the favour of India. The new viceroy refused to meet Gandhi after he returned from London in December 1931. The British government refused to recognize the Congress as representatives of the people of India. Moreover, the government went back to its repressive ways by arresting Jawaharlal Nehru and also Abdul Ghaffar Khan who was leading the Khudai Khidmatgars' Movement in the North-West Frontier Province.

Circumstances were thus raised where the Congress had to re-launch the Civil Disobedience Movement, especially after the new viceroy refused to meet Gandhi for any further negotiation. In January 1932, Gandhi was arrested and the government once again curtailed people's civil liberties. The government followed this by giving itself the right to appropriate properties and detain people. With such powers, the government put all prominent leaders of the Congress behind bars. With this, the masses broke out in mass demonstrations to protest against the government's actions; liquor shops were picketed as well as foreign goods' shops. However, the government only reacted with more force. Large number of people was jailed, Congress was banned and the police occupied Gandhian ashrams. Demonstrators were beaten up, those who refused to pay taxes were jailed and their properties seized. Yet, the movement continued for two years. The movement was withdrawn by Gandhi in April 1934 and his call was obeyed by the people of the country.

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### 11.4 THE SECOND WORLD WAR

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In 1939, the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, made an announcement that India was at war. This was done without consulting the Indian assembly. The Government Act of India calls for the Viceroy to consult the Executive Committee prior to any decision-making, related to defence or external affairs. However, this move caused deterioration in the relations between the Congress and the Muslim League.

The war on Germany had complete support from the League. This move by Jinnah was in the interest of Muslims. In 1940, Jinnah's speech referred to an independent Muslim state for the first time, this was an important historical event which was later named the Lahore Declaration. The name 'Pakistan' was used during this speech. At the time of the war, the power of the League increased with its number of members crossing 2 million.

#### **Congress and the War**

Gandhi exerted pressure on the British government for negotiating with Hitler. This policy was, however, not supported by a large number of Congress members. More importantly, Nehru, who had at that time come back from Europe, was of the belief that India should support Britain in its stand against fascists. However, the idea that India should independently decide on this issue was also supported by him. Nehru was fully supported by the Congress and the announcement that India was at war with Germany was rejected. As a mark of protest, resignations were given by all Congress state governments. In 1940, a condition was put forward by the Congress, according to which India would only support the war if a national government was established. This demand was rejected by the Viceroy. This led to the start of a campaign

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of civil disobedience, which was led by the Congress. During this campaign, 1700 members of the Congress were arrested. Since many members of the Congress were arrested between 1940 and 1945, its position became very weak. At the same time, the British government began to support the Muslim League, which had become more powerful and influential.

### **Impact on British Policy in India**

More than 30,000 British soldiers were sent to India, for restoring law and order. Thousands of people died as a result of this. A large number of prominent members of the Congress were also placed under arrest and in prisons by the British. Gandhi was imprisoned till 1944. The British released Nehru, then arrested him again and kept him in prison till 1945. The Congress was declared as illegal by the British government and all its finances were seized. There was no effective existence of the Congress between 1942 and 1944.

At the time of the Second World War, Subhash Chandra Bose opposed the British. He was a former member of the Congress who was also against Gandhi's strategy of non-violence. He established the 'Forward Bloc', which believed in the practice of militancy to achieve independence. As war began in 1939, Bose affirmed support to the Axis powers (Germany, Italy and Japan).

The British arrested him but he escaped from prison and went to Nazi Germany. From there he was sent to Singapore by the Germans. In Singapore, he began recruiting Indian prisoners of war as members of the Indian National Army. Later, the membership increased to 20, 000 volunteers. This went at war with Japan, to prevent it from invading India from Burma. Bose later established the Provisional Government of free India in 1943. In 1945, Bose died in a plane crash. After his death, support for the Indian National Army in India declined. When the war ended, its leaders were arrested and put on trial for subversive activities. They were then sent to a penal colony. When protests came from the Congress, the British government changed their sentence and dismissed them from the army. Nevertheless, a large number of the Indians who had fought the war against the Japanese returned with new ideas for an independent nation.

These ideas served the nationalist movements that began in parts of South East (Asia).

### **Political Effects**

The existence of the Congress almost ended at the time of the war because it rejected British proposals in the form of Cripps' Mission. On the other hand, the number of members of the Muslim League increased and reached the 2 million mark, since the late 1930s. It was forced to adopt a policy to support the British Government at the time of the war. Its popularity grew in the provincial elections of 1945, when it won 90 per cent of Muslim seats



against its 5 per cent win in the 1937 elections. The Congress could not afford to ignore the League any more. After consolidating its position, the League was on the same level as that of the Congress in any negotiation with the British. The League and other Indian groups expected that the British would leave India after the war. However, as this did not happen, the middle class Indian and the army declined to support the British.

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### Check Your Progress

3. Mention one of the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin pact.
4. Who was the leader of the Khudai Khidmatgars' Movement?
5. Who established the 'Forward Bloc'?

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## 11.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru were two distinguished Swarajist leaders.
2. The Swarajists defeated the Liberal in the election.
3. One term of the Gandhi-Irwin pact was that all people arrested for non-violent protest were to be released immediately.
4. The leader of the Khudai Khidmatgars' Movement was Abdul Ghaffar Khan.
5. Subhash Chandra Bose established the Forward Bloc.

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## 11.6 SUMMARY

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- The first major Gandhian movement all over India was the Non-Cooperation Movement from 1920 to 1922. The movement was withdrawn in 1922 by Gandhi in view of the rise of violence among its followers.
- After the termination of the movement his followers were agitated over the future course of action. Leaders like C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru thought that, as there was no immediate chance of resuming the struggle, an alternative strategy was called for. That strategy was Council entry.
- Until 1923, the Councils were dominated by the Liberals who had walked out of the Congress at the beginning of the Non-Cooperation Movement. When the Swarajists fought elections, those Liberals were defeated all over the country.

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- On 12 March, 1930, Gandhi started a march from Sabarmati ashram to the sea at Dandi accompanied by 72 followers. People cheered the marchers and joined them along the way. As Gandhi walked past them, villagers spun yarn on charkhas as a mark of their solidarity to the movement.
- The colonial government was taken by surprise with the reaction of the masses as it had not anticipated such widespread support to the movement. Insecure, it decided to arrest Gandhi in May 1930 but the decision only added much fuel to the fire that the movement had stirred.
- The most important feature of the Civil Disobedience Movement was the support it received from the youth of the country, especially students and women.
- In 1939, the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, made an announcement that India was at war. This was done without consulting the Indian assembly.
- Nehru was fully supported by the Congress and the announcement that India was at war with Germany was rejected. As a mark of protest, resignations were given by all Congress state governments.
- At the time of the Second World War, Subhash Chandra Bose opposed the British. He was a former member of the Congress who was also against Gandhi's strategy of non-violence. He established the 'Forward Bloc', which believed in the practice of militancy to achieve independence.
- The existence of the Congress almost ended at the time of the war because it rejected British proposals in the form of Cripps' Mission.

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### 11.7 KEY WORDS

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- **Diarchy:** It was a system of government by two independent authorities (especially in India 1919–35).
- **Civil Disobedience:** It means the refusal to comply with certain laws considered unjust, as a peaceful form of political protest.
- **Activism:** It refers to the policy or action of using vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change.

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### 11.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short Answer Questions

1. What was the strategy of the Swarajists after the end of the non-cooperation movement?

2. What were the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact?
3. Write a short-note on the Swarajists Congress Party.

### **Long Answer Questions**

1. Discuss the Civil Disobedience Movement in detail. What was its impact?
2. Describe the reaction of Indian nationalists to the outbreak of the Second World War.
3. Examine the impact of the Second World War on India.

### **NOTES**

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## **11.9 FURTHER READINGS**

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# UNIT 12 PARTITION AND INDEPENDENCE

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## NOTES

### Structure

- 12.0 Introduction
- 12.1 Objectives
- 12.2 The Quit India Movement
- 12.3 The Partition and Independence
  - 12.3.1 Some Personalities
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## 12.0 INTRODUCTION

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British India sent over two million volunteer soldiers during World War II (1939-1945), since Great Britain was part of the Allied Nations. Additionally, several princely states provided large donations to support the Allied campaign against the Axis power. Indians fought in all corners of the globe; in Germany and Italy, in the deserts against Rommel and in the Asian region defending India against the Japanese, and liberating British colonies such as Singapore and Hong Kong when the Japanese surrendered in August 1945. While the Muslim League supported the British war efforts, there was a growing demand from the Congress seeking independence that too before it agreed to help Britain. The Crown refused, and when the Congress announced the Quit India Movement in August 1942, the party leaders were imprisoned. Japan set up an army of Indian POWs known as the Indian National Army with help of Indian revolutionaries.

Though India got Independence on 15 August 1947, the country was partitioned and a new country came into existence, Pakistan. The basic reason for the Partition was entirely political. We have studied the reasons of rise of communalism in the previous unit, but it is generally considered that the Revolt of 1857 marked a Hindu-Muslim divide. Gradually, both the communities became acutely aware of their distinct religious identities, and its end result was the Partition.

In this unit, you will learn how the nationalist fervour was taking a distinct turn and the common people along with the Congress Party wanted the British to quit India. And finally after achieving Independence, India was divided and Pakistan was formed.

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## 12.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Examine the impact of the Quit India Movement
  - Describe the incidents that led to Independence and Partition
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## 12.2 THE QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

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After the fall of Cripps' Mission, the Indian National Congress became stringent in its condition and passed a resolution in July 1942 demanding complete independence from British government; failing which the resolution proposed a massive civil disobedience against the government.

However, Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, a prominent Congress leader, along with several local and regional level leaders, organized the Quit India Movement. Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad reluctantly joined Gandhi's decision to back the proposal. On the other hand several outstanding leaders like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Dr Anugrah Narayan Sinha along with socialists like Asoka Mehta and Jayaprakash Narayan openly supported the civil disobedience movement.

Allama Mashriqi (head of Khaksar Tehrik) was also invited to join the Quit India Movement, but he was critical about the outcome of the movement and creation of Pakistan; and therefore did not agree with the resolution. On 28 July, 1942 Mashriqi wrote to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Mahatma Gandhi, Rajagopalachari, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramiyya and Sambamurty (former Speaker of the Madras Assembly) stating his reasons to not join the Quit India Movement.

In a telegram, which was later published in press, Mashriqi said, "My honest opinion is that Civil Disobedience Movement is a little pre-mature. The Congress should first concede open-heartedly and with handshake to Muslim League the theoretical Pakistan, and thereafter all parties unitedly make demand of Quit India. If the British refuse, start total disobedience..."

Despite several leaders opposing the resolution, on 8 August 1942, Quit India resolution was passed at the Bombay session of All India Congress Committee (AICC). At the session held at Gowalia Tank, Bombay, Gandhi urged the Indians to participate in the Quit India Movement through non-violent civil disobedience and act as Independent nation. His call found massive support amongst Indians.

## Opposition to Quit India

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Where the Quit India Movement had the support of the masses, the movement was opposed by several political parties. Parties like Hindu Mahasabha and Communist Party of India opposed the movement and did not rally with the Congress. The Communist Party of India though against the movement, was in alliance with the Soviet Union and in support of the war, despite industrial workers and unions supporting the movement. This led to a ban on the party by the British government.

The movement also found opposition from various princely states who feared the loss of their estates in an independent India; and therefore they funded the opposition.

Several Muslim leaders were also opposed to Quit India Movement and Muhammad Ali Jinnah's plea found an audience among large number of Muslims who responded by supporting by enlisting in British army. The league gained support in provincial legislatures and as the Congress resigned, it took control of Sindh, Bengal and Northwest Frontier.

The nationalists however had little international support. Though United States was supporting the Indian freedom movement theoretically, it was also an ally of Britain. When Churchill threatened to resign if forced to, U.S. slyly supported him but continued its pretence to strengthen public support for war. This move annoyed both Indians and British.

### Local activism

Where on one hand the Quit India Movement was facing opposition at the national level, at the same time the movement was successful at the regional level where at several places locals had already starting rebelling against the British.

In Satara, Talcher, Tamluk and Contai subdivisions of Midnapore local people were establishing their own parallel governments which, however, were discontinued on the personal request of Gandhi in 1944.

In Ballia, the easternmost district of Uttar Pradesh, local populace broke a jail and released the arrested Congress leaders and established their independent rule. It was weeks before Britishers could re-establish themselves in the district.

In western Gujarat, Saurashtra the tradition of 'baharvatiya' (i.e., going outside the law), supported the activities of the Quit India Movement in the region. In Bengal, same was fuelled by the resentment of peasants against the new war taxes and the forced rice exports. The resistance, which, was at its height in 1942, was stifled by the great famine of 1943 and led to the suspension of the movement.

## Suppression of the movement

The movement was primarily designed to keep the Congress party united. This further alarmed the British, who were already wary of Japanese army advancing on India-Burma border. In order to control the agitations, the British imprisoned Gandhi along with prominent members of Party's Working Committee (national leadership). Due to the arrest of major leaders of Congress, Aruna Asaf Ali, young and relatively unknown till then, presided at the AICC session on August 9 and hoisted the flag. Later the Congress party was banned, which only strengthened mass sympathy for the cause and despite the lack of leadership, demonstrations and protests of large scale were carried out all over the country. However, not all of these demonstrations were peaceful, at various places bombs exploded, government buildings were set on fire, electricity and communication lines were severed.

To these demonstrations, Britishers responded by making mass arrests. Over 100,000 people were arrested and were fined. Soldiers were also ordered to flog the demonstrators and shoot if required. Several hundred people were killed in the shootings. This forced many leaders to go underground but they continued their struggle by broadcasting over radio and distributing pamphlets. Looking at the situation, British even set-aside a ship to take Gandhi and other eminent leaders of South Africa or Yemen, but decided against it as they were wary about revolt getting further intensified.

The Congress was cut-off from the rest of the world for over three years. Gandhi lost his wife Kasturba Gandhi and his personal secretary Mahadev Desai within a very short span. Despite such personal losses and an indisposed health, Gandhi went on a 21-day fast and maintained his resolve to continuous resistance. Although the British released Gandhi on account of his health in 1944, Gandhi kept up the resistance, demanding the release of the Congress leadership.

By early 1944, India was mostly peaceful again, while the Congress leadership was still incarcerated. A sense that the movement had failed depressed many nationalists, while Jinnah and the Muslim League, as well as Congress opponents like the Communists sought to gain political mileage, criticizing Gandhi and the Congress Party.

### Check Your Progress

1. Which political parties opposed the Quit India movement?
2. When did the Quit India resolution pass?

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## 12.3 THE PARTITION AND INDEPENDENCE

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### NOTES

The result of so many political events was that many great political leaders jointly tried to pave a final way for the attainment of India's independence.

#### **August Offer, 1940**

Meanwhile, a change of government took place in Britain in May 1940 and Winston Churchill became the Prime Minister (1940–1945). The fall of France temporarily softened the attitude of the Congress. Britain was in immediate danger of Nazi occupation. On 1 June 1940, Gandhi wrote, 'We do not seek our independence out of British ruin'. As the war was taking a menacing turn from the allies' point of view, the Congress offered to cooperate in the war effort, if at least a provisional National Government was constituted at the Centre and the right of India to complete independence was acknowledged by Great Britain. The government's response came as a statement from the Viceroy, on 8 August 1940. This was known as the August Offer. It referred to the need to consult representatives of 'several communities' and it was made clear that the British would not transfer responsibilities 'to any system of government' whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. This in effect was an approval of one of Jinnah's central demands, since the outbreak of the war. Jinnah was not only the League sole spokesman for India's Muslims, but he also had the League's power to veto any constitutional changes that the League considered detrimental.

Meanwhile, the British government stated that it would welcome the efforts of representative Indians themselves to reach a basis of friendly agreement. They hoped that immediate effect would be given to the enlargement of the Central Executive Council by nominating additional Indian members and to the establishment of a War Advisory Council. The War Advisory Council was believed to comprise representatives of British India and the Indian states. The August Offer shocked nationalists and Gandhi at last, sanctioned Civil Disobedience, but of a peculiarly limited and deliberately ineffective kind. The Congress started its individual Satyagraha. The first man to court arrest was Vinobha Bhave, the Bhoodan leader. He was followed by Jawaharlal Nehru, who in November, was sentenced to four years of rigorous imprisonment. Others, such as Vallabhbhai Patel and Maulana Azad also participated in this Satyagraha.

Nearly 20,000 Congressmen courted arrest during the 1940–1941. However, the movement petered out by the autumn of 1941. It was decided that if the government did not arrest a Satyagrahi, he or she would not only repeat the performance but would also move into the villages and start a trek towards Delhi. This marked the beginning of a movement that came to be known as the Delhi Chalo movement. The aims clearly were not to cause any

serious embarrassment to the British, but merely to register the presence of the Congress and hostility to a war being waged without consulting Indians. This was also meant to give Linlithgow no opportunity for a major crackdown. At the same time, this movement was also intended to give the British Government further opportunity to peacefully accept the Indian demands.

In February, Chiang Kai-Shek, during his visit to India, publicly expressed sympathy for India's aspirations for freedom. All this provided an opening for relatively pro-India groups, particularly Labour members of War Cabinet like Cripps and Attlee in Britain. These groups persuade the War Cabinet in the first week of March 1942 to agree to a draft declaration that promised post-war dominion status with the right of secession. A constitution-making body was elected by provincial legislatures, with individual provinces being given the right not to join it and with the states being invited to appoint representatives. Cripps proposal also had a clause that invited immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of Indians in the national council on urgent issues. However, this clause also insisted that the British, during the war, would have to retain the control and direction of the defence to India. The declaration was not published immediately, but Cripps went to India on March 23 to negotiate on its basis with Indian leaders. Negotiations between Cripps and the Congress leaders broke down. The Congress objected to the provision for Dominion status instead of complete independence, the representation of the princely states in the constituent assembly not by the people of the states but by the nominees of the rulers and above all, by the provision for the partition of India.

The British government also refused to accept the demand for immediate transfer of effective power to Indians and a real share in the responsibility for India's defence of India. Gandhi urged the Working Committee to reject the post-dated proposal. The reason for the failure was that Cripps was asked not to go beyond the draft declaration. Moreover, Churchill, the Secretary of State (Amery), the Viceroy (Linlithgow) and the Commander-in-Chief (Wavell), did not want Cripps to succeed and constantly sabotaged his efforts to accommodate Indian opinion. Cripps left behind frustrated and embittered Indian people.

### **Cripps' Proposal**

After Japan attacked Pearl Harbour in December 1941, it was evident that India would be the next target of the Japanese forces. In April 1942, Britain sent Sir Stafford Cripps to India. He came with an offer for all provinces, for complete dominion status with the right to leave the Empire and Commonwealth, after the war. It was also recommended by Cripps that any province that did not wish to join India could turn into an independent state. As the war approached India (Singapore fell on 15 February 1942, Rangoon on 8 March and the Andaman islands on 23 March), the British at last felt

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obliged to make some gestures to win over India's public opinion. Roosevelt raised the topic of Indian political reforms in his talks with Churchill in Washington, in December 1941. On 2 January, Indian liberal leaders like Sapru and Jayakar appealed for an immediate dominion status and expansion of the Viceroy's executive into a national government.

### Quit India Movement

Cripps' proposal was rejected by Nehru and the Congress, who instead demanded a complete cabinet government in which Indians had complete power of decision-making in India. The concept of independence of provinces was against the aim of the Congress to create a strong and united India with central governance. These demands were rejected by the British government. This followed the Congress's decision to support Gandhi's non-violent 'Quit India' campaign. This campaign was declared in August 1942. Independence with immediate effect was Gandhi's demand and this demand was supported by a threat of a movement of mass non-violence (satyagraha). His demand was that the British move out of India, with the exception of the troops that were fighting against Japan. Indian cities began to witness peaceful demonstrations. Later, these demonstrations mostly turned violent. This movement also blocked supplies for the British forces. In these circumstances and a constantly declining support base for the British, Mahatma Gandhi decided to launch a final offensive against the British rule. Thus, the famous Quit India movement began in August 1942. Following were the reasons for the outbreak of the movement:

- There was anger and hostility towards meaningless war, especially when thousands of wounded soldiers returned from the Burmese war.
- Prices of food grains were rising; almost 60-point rise in eastern UP between April and August 1942. There was also shortage of rice and salt.
- The majority of British, American and Australian soldiers stationed in India ill-treated Indians; many of them even raped Indian women.
- The boats of common men, in Bengal and Assam were seized and destroyed, due to the fear of Japanese attack in Bengal and Assam. Gandhi wrote in *Harijan*, 'To deprive people in East Bengal of boats is like cutting off vital limbs' (3 May 1942).
- During the crisis of food grains, Indian markets were controlled by black marketeers and profiteers. This affected the poor most, especially in eastern India.
- The war made some traders and capitalist wealthy, but a large section of *Banias* and *Marwaris* started suffering losses in Malaya and Burma, from mid-1942 onwards. The capitalist element in the Congress Working Committee took notice of it.

- The success story of Japanese in South-East Asian countries demystified the superiority of Europeans, especially the British.

Thus, in mid-1942, the condition in India was that of chaos. Even Gandhi, who was generally patient, was becoming impatient and in a different and militant mood. He urged the British, ‘This orderly disciplined anarchy should go and if as a result there is complete lawlessness, I would risk it.’ Congress leaders met at Wardha in mid-July to discuss the course of action and on 8 August 1942, the Quit India resolution was passed by the Bombay session of the AICC (All India Congress Committee). The leaders made an enthusiastic call for mass struggle on non-violent lines, on the widest possible scale. In his famous ‘do or die’ speech, Gandhi declared, ‘let every Indian consider himself to be a free man. Mere jail going would not do.’ Interestingly, Jawaharlal Nehru, Bhulabhai Desai and Rajgopalachari opposed the Quit India resolution. Though Nehru, as always, fell in line and moved the Quit India resolution, which had the following conditions:

- Immediate end to British rule in India. The British were clearly told, ‘Quit India’.
- India is committed to defend itself against all types of Fascism and Imperialism.
- A provisional government of India after British withdrawal. Apart from formal resolutions, Gandhi, in an informal way at Gowalia Tank Ground (Bombay), addressed various sections of society:
  - o To the students: Be ready for sacrifice and be confident and leave studies
  - o To the peasants: If zamindars are pro-government, do not pay rent
  - o To the soldiers: Do not open fire on fellow countrymen
  - o To government servants: Do not resign but oppose the government from within
  - o To princes: Support the masses and accept sovereignty of your people
  - o To the people of princely states: Support the ruler only if he is anti-government and declare your state to be a part of the Indian nation

The government took no time in taking decision and arrested most of the leaders on 9 August 1942, including Gandhi. The sudden crackdown of the British gave rise to spontaneous reaction among the people. In this movement, there were no other demands made to the British.

The nationalist leaders simply asked the British to quit India. However, the colonial government retaliated to Gandhi’s call of quit India by arresting not only him but all other active members of the Congress Working Committee. People were angry at the arrest of their leaders; masses came

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out openly on the streets and launched attacks on the colonial government in whatever way they could. With no leaders to show them the way, people resorted to violent methods, attacked, looted and destroyed government property. The government reacted with equal severe measures and blindly killed people in open firing. With the help of large-scale killings and arrests, the British government was finally able to suppress the movement.

By the end of 1943, the number of people arrested was well over 91,000 as per the official figures. While they were successful in suppressing the people, it was becoming increasingly apparent to the British government that it would no longer be possible to hold onto India for very long. Till then, the colonial government had ruled the country with the help of the support system they had established in the country since the 19th century. This system was eroding in the face of the call for freedom and series of struggles launched by nationalist leaders.

It was apparent that without the support of people of different sections, including the peasants, workers, middle classes, rich people, police and army, it would not be possible to keep control over the country. Upon this realization, the British started preparing for a gradual and peaceful withdrawal from India. Beginning 1944, all leaders of the Congress were gradually released from jail. The process to transfer power from the British to Indian hands was also initiated. Finally, India gained independence from the mighty British imperialists in August 1947.

However, this was not an absolute victory. The country suffered a massive blow in the face of partition into two states, India and Pakistan, solely on the religious lines. The partition and independence was accompanied by communal violence at a very large scale. Thus, while the year 1947 is one of triumphs in the form of successful end to the long-drawn struggle for independence, it was also one of a great tragedy for the unity of India as the country.

### **Demand for Pakistan**

Communal politics took a new turn in India, which was marked by propagation of the 'two-nation theory'. This theory stated that India consisted of two separate nations, on the basis of religion: Hindus and Muslims. The 'two-national theory' was considered false in the history of India. During medieval times, a common culture was shared by both, Hindus and Muslims. Both of them had fought for freedom together during and after the Revolt of 1857. Hindus and Muslims together were equally repressed during the national struggle for independence. In 1940, Pakistan was demanded as an independent state at the Lahore session by the Muslim League. The basis of this demand was the two-nation theory. Many Muslims in India did not support this demand.

**Role of Indian National Army (INA)**

The Indian National Army (INA) was founded by Subhash Chandra Bose in 1942. They sided with the Axis Powers during the Second World War (1939– 1945) with a motive to overthrow the colonial powers from the Indian soil. The INA was also termed as the ‘Azad Hind Fauz’. Japanese forces defeated the British in 1941 at Malaya. This incident inspired the Indian populace residing in Southeast Asia. The Indians came together and organized a number of associations based out of South East Asia. Pritam Singh was a leader of such an organization. He, along with Japanese officer, Major Fujihara, requested Mohan Singh to constitute an Indian Army comprising the captured Indian soldiers. Though initially reluctant, Mohan Singh yielded and Fujihara handed over around 40,000 Indian soldiers who had surrendered to him. This paved the way towards the formation of the INA. Singapore, surrendered to the Japanese in February 1942. Revolutionary activist Rash Behari Bose, then residing in Japan arranged an association named Free Indians living in Japan. A conference was held in Bangkok on 15 June 1942, where it was decided upon that a National Indian Army would be constituted. A five member working committee was formed and Rash Behari Bose was made its president. The formation of the INA was formally declared.

In the meantime, Subhash Bose left Calcutta on 17 January 1941 and arrived in Germany after travelling through Afghanistan. In Berlin, he organized an India government in exile and extended support to Germany. He began to broadcast his aims and objectives over Radio Berlin and made contact with Japan. Bose also came in touch with Adolf Hitler, who extended his help to the former. This aroused tremendous enthusiasm in India. Indians in Germany gave him the title of ‘Netaji’ and the slogan of ‘Jai-Hind’ was initiated here during this time. Bose arrived in Tokyo in June 1943, and was cordially received by the Hideki Tojo, the Japanese Prime Minister (1941–44). Japan extended their help to India. A huge crowd gathered at Singapore to receive Bose when he arrived there on 2 July 1943. On 4 July Rash Behari Bose resigned and Bose was appointed the president of the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia. On August 25, Bose took the leadership of the INA; on 21 October 1943, declared the formation of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and on the 23rd declared war on Britain and America.

With the INA headquarters now shifted to Rangoon, Bose and his brigade arrived in Rangoon in 1944.

It was decided to keep the Indian detachment as big as a battalion; that it would be commanded by an Indian and the war would continue as per the Joint plan of Action. Meanwhile, the Indians were to fight as a separate unit on selected spots. The battles were to be held at the Kaladan valley of Arakan and Kalam and Haka centre of China hills to the east of Lusai hills.

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For this purpose, the Subhash Brigade was divided into three battalions. The first contingent captured Paletoa and Doletmai as it advanced across both the banks of Kaladan. Maudak, a British border out-post at a distance of 64 kilometres from Doletmai, was also captured by the battalion a few days later.

Soon after, the army ran short of arms and ammunition. Due to this, many soldiers left the battalion and those who were left were commanded by Surajmal.

Two other battalions, in the meantime, took charge of the Haka-Kalan borderline. It was later decided that INA would take position at Kohima, Nagaland, after the fall of Imphal at Manipur. This was done so as to allow it to enter Bengal after crossing Brahmaputra. Meanwhile, the Gandhi and Azad Brigades also advanced towards Imphal. On March 21, the Prime Minister of Japan announced that those Indian territories which had been freed from the British would be administered under the provisional independent government to be formed by Netaji.

Despite various hazards, including the short supply of food and ammunitions, the INA made advance of 241 kms inside India. A few days after the Japanese PM had made the declaration, the Americans and the British took joint steps to invade into Japan. Thus, the latter was forced to withdraw its support to India. Consequently, the INA also had to make a retreat and when the allied powers recaptured Burma, it was forced to surrender. It was then that a proposal was forwarded by Chakravarthi Rajagopalachari to provide a solution to the political impasse between All India Muslim League and Indian National Congress. This proposal is also known as the C. Rajagopalachari's formula (or C.R. formula or Rajaji formula) and was given on the eve of the Indian independence from the British. However, Gandhi argued that the formula conceded to the core demand of the Muslim League. Gandhi wanted the League to renounce its Lahore Resolution, which he argued was based on the two-nation theory. On the other hand, Mohammad Ali Jinnah opined that Gandhi must accept the demand of the League and accept that Hindus and Muslims were two independent nations.

### **Wavell Plan and Simla Conference (1945)**

After the talks between Gandhi-Jinnah failed, the new viceroy of India called Wavell, who had Lord Linlithglow, was of the opinion that any new initiative should be forwarded by the government. On June 14, 1945, new proposals were put forward in order to make fresh constitutional changes in India within the framework of the 1935 Government of India Act. On June 25, 1945, a conference was organized in Shimla in order to bring the representatives of both the parties on the same table. While the proposals that were put forward were conciliatory, they also proved unsatisfactory and provocative for some others. As per the Viceroy, the Executive Council was



to be completely comprised of Indian except for the Viceroy himself and the British Commander-in-Chief.

It was decided that while the special powers of the Viceroy would not lapse officially but they would not be used 'unreasonably'. Such characteristics of the proposals, which were divisive in nature to some extent, were also put on the table at the conference. It was hence decided that both the communities, i.e. the Hindus and the Muslims, would be equally represented in the Council. In other words, the demand of the Muslim League for parity on a communal basis had been officiated through an official declaration of the British policy for the first time. The summoning of the Simla Conference was the concrete outcome to the Wavell Plan.

The Simla Conference started on a note of optimism. Gandhi believed in the sincerity of the Wavell Plan and that it would lead to freedom of the nation. However, Jinnah 'flatly refused to cooperate', as was later reported by Wavell. He felt that the leader of the Muslim League undermined the conference and will continue to do so until it conceded to its terms. One of these demands was that those Muslims who do not belong to the League not be appointed to the Executive Council. However, Abul Kalam Azad, who was the then Congress president, firmly opposed such a demand. He felt that the party would be deceiving its Muslim members if it were to accept the demands of the Muslim League.

However, Wavell refused to go ahead without the approval of Jinnah. When Jinnah refused to cooperate, the viceroy announced that the conference had failed. For many months to come, the Muslim League refused to concede to the common demands of the proposal. Therefore, the struggle of freedom came to be dominated with communal colours. While it was now clear that the British were ready to free India of its clutches, the conflict arose between those who wished to see India as a united and secular state and those who wanted a division on religious lines.

### **Cabinet Mission Plan (1946)**

The aim of the British Cabinet Mission of 1946 to India was to discuss and plan for the transfer of power from the British Raj to Indian leadership. The objective was to provide India with independence under Dominion status in the Commonwealth of Nations. The Mission was formulated at the initiative of Clement Richard Attlee, the Prime Minister of the UK. It comprised of Lord Pethick-Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India; Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade; and A.V. Alexander, the First Lord of the Admiralty. However, Lord Wavell, the Viceroy of India, did not participate.

### **Background**

During the general elections of England, held in 1945, the Labour Party, under the authority of Attlee, routed the Conservatives, under British Conservative

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politician and statesman, Winston Churchill. Later on, Lord Wavell was summoned to London who informed that Britain had decided to quit India.

Soon after, general elections were also held in India in 1945-46 for provincial assemblies and the legislative assembly at the Centre. In these elections, the Congress won fifty-seven seats in the central legislative assembly, while the Muslim League took over all the thirty seats reserved for the Muslims. In 1937, the Congress had 714 seats in the provinces, while it won 923 seats in 1946.

On the other hand, in 1937, the Muslim League was able to occupy only 109 seats out of the Muslim quota of 492; however, in 1946, it won 425 seats. The British Cabinet Mission, a special mission of cabinet ministers, came to India on 24 March 1946 to enable the nation to gain independence as fast as possible. The Mission was in India for almost five weeks to discuss important issues with significant representatives of Indian states and those of British India.

A conference was held on 5 May 1946 at Simla, wherein leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League participated to discuss about:

- Grouping of provinces
- Character of the federal union
- Setting up of a constitution-making machinery

However, the conference was closed due to incompatibility between the Congress and the League. On 16 May 1946, the Mission published a statement, popularly known as the Cabinet Mission Plan, with their recommendations. The important provisions of the Plan are as follows:

1. A federation comprising of both the princely states and British India was to be formed, which should deal with defence, foreign affairs and communications.
2. The federation should comprise of an executive and a legislature.
3. The provinces of British India should be vested with all residuary powers and all subjects, except for the Union subjects.
4. All subjects would be under the princely states except for those surrendered to the Union.
5. Provinces should have the liberty to form groups (sub-federal).
6. A provision should be made in the constitution of the Union, which would allow any province, by a majority vote of its legislative assembly, to necessitate a reconsideration of the terms of the Constitution after an initial period of ten years.
7. A constituent assembly should be formed on the basis of the recently elected provincial legislatures. The assembly should be formed by allotting to each province a total number of seats

proportional to its population. Elections should be held by a method of proportional representation with single transferable vote.

8. The administration of the country should be carried out while the Constitution of India was being formulated. An interim government should also be set up which should have the support of major political parties.

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### Direct Action Day

The League decided that 16 August 1946 would be observed as 'Direct Action Day' throughout the country for the purpose of winning the separate Muslim state. In this tense situation, the viceroy's decision to invite the Congress to form the interim government at the Centre added fuel to the fire. In Calcutta, on 16 August 1946, the League organized public demonstrations and strikes, resulting in clashes and rioting all over the city. The mob fury continued for four consecutive days, after which normalcy was gradually restored. The Bengal government led by the League leader, H.S. Suhrawardy, had declared 16 August a public holiday, which made things worse. Nor did it call the army until the situation became completely out of control.

### Attlee's Announcement

It was obvious that something drastic had to be done to break the deadlock. The initiative was taken by Attlee, who on 20 February 1947, announced in Parliament that the government's 'definite intention was to transfer power' into responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948. This historic declaration caught everyone by surprise. It was declared that the British would be pulling out of the country little more than a year hence. The Indian people would have to settle their differences before then. Attlee, on 20 February 1947, announced that the British would withdraw from India by 30 June 1948, and that Lord Mountbatten would replace Wavell.

British powers and obligations vis-à-vis the princely states would lapse with transfer of power but these would not be transferred to any successor government in British India. Partition of the country was implicit in the provision that if the constituent assembly were not fully representative then power would be transferred to more than one Central government. It was hoped that fixing a deadline would shock both parties to come to an agreement. The Muslim League launched civil disobedience in Punjab, which led to the fall of Punjab Chief Minister, Malik Khizar Hayat Khan's ministry.

Jinnah saw victory in sight and made a desperate attempt to secure control over the provinces with Muslim majority. Riots broke out in wild frenzy in Calcutta, Assam, Punjab and North-West Frontier Province. The new Viceroy reached India on 22 March 1947. He had come with instructions

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to work for a united India; but meetings with leaders of different parties and communities soon convinced him that partition was inevitable. Few people desired the country's dismemberment. Gandhi declared that India would be divided 'over my dead body'. Abul Kalam Azad was vehemently opposed to the creation of Pakistan. But Jinnah was adamant: Muslims must have their own state.

### **Mountbatten Plan**

Mountbatten now set about convincing Congress leaders of the necessity of partition. He made use of two opposite lines of reasoning. On the one hand, he declared that 'the truncated Pakistan, if conceded now, was bound to come back later'; on the other hand, he promised that if India's two unwilling wings were lopped off, a strong and united Centre would be the result. This second argument appealed to Home Minister Sardar Patel, who was already taking into consideration the internal security of the country. Mountbatten overcame Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's objection by an appeal to his democratic instinct. No community, the Viceroy said, should be forced to join a nation against its will. Now, it was time to speak with Gandhi. In a last desperate effort, Gandhi suggested making Jinnah the head of the government of an undivided India. The Muslim leader could select the entire ministry himself. But after their sad experiences in the interim government, Patel and Nehru were unwilling to expose themselves to Jinnah's caprices. Finally, even Gandhi relented. Attlee announced the plan in the House of Commons on 3 June 1947, which came to be known as the 'June 3rd Plan.' The Government's Plan or the Mountbatten Plan dealt with the method by which power will be transferred from British to Indian hands, in particular the methods by which Muslim-majority provinces would choose whether they would remain in India or opt for the 'new entity' that is Pakistan. In Sind and Baluchistan, a straightforward decision would be made by the provincial legislatures. The legislatures of Bengal and Punjab would have to make two choices; first, whether the majority was for joining Pakistan, and, if so, whether the provinces should be partitioned into Muslim and non-Muslim areas. Special arrangements were made to determine the popular will in the North-West Frontier Provinces and in the Muslim majority district of Sylhet in Assam. Boundary commissions would be set up if partition was desired.

The Indian constituent assembly would continue to function but a separate assembly would be convened for areas that chose to become parts of Pakistan. The provincial choices went as expected. Baluchistan, Sind and the North-West Frontier opted for Pakistan. Punjab and Bengal decided for double partition—the provinces would leave India, but their Muslim-minority areas would remain parts of the mother country. Sylhet would join the eastern wing of Pakistan.

Boundary commissions were set up to delineate frontier between Muslim and non-Muslim areas of Punjab and Bengal. The English Chairman of the two tribunals, Sir Cyril Radcliffe, was ultimately requested to make his own award. Not only the land, but also the financial and material assets of India had to be divided. Each of the new nations had to have its own civil services and armed forces. Lord Mountbatten showed considerable ‘expedition and dispatch’ in bringing about a solution to these and other problems before the deadline expired.

The Indian Independence Act of 1947 gave a legal effect to the June 3rd Plan. The Bill was introduced in the British Parliament on 4 July 1947. It was passed quickly and without amendment, and on 18 July 1947, it received the Royal assent. India had won her freedom but the price had been partition. The Dominion of Pakistan was inaugurated in Karachi on 14 August 1947. At midnight of 15 August 1947, as the clock struck 12, India became free. Nehru proclaimed it to be the nation with his famous ‘Tryst with Destiny’ speech. On the morning of 15 August 1947, Lord Mountbatten was sworn in as Governor-General and he in turn swore in Jawaharlal Nehru as the first Prime Minister of a free India. The 15 August 1947 dawned, revealing the dual reality of independence and partition. Lakhs of refugees, forced to leave the lands of their forefathers, were pouring into the two new states. The symbol of this tragedy at the moment of national triumph was the forlorn figure of Gandhiji—the man who had given the message of non-violence, truth, love and courage, and manliness to the Indian people. In the midst of national rejoicing, he was touring the hate-torn land of Bengal, trying to bring comfort to people who were even then paying the price of freedom through senseless communal slaughter.

### **Indian Independence Act, 1947**

The Indian Independence Act declared that the British power over the Indian states would lapse on 15 August 1947. The states were allowed to join either India or Pakistan. Before that date, most of the states had signed the Instrument of Accession by which they agreed to accede to India. But there were some states which thought that in the changed situation, they were entitled to declare their independence.

### **Independence and Partition**

The last two years of British rule were marked by tortuous negotiations between British, Congress and League statesmen. These were increasingly accompanied by communal violence, culminating in freedom accompanied by partition and sporadic, localized but often extremely militant and united mass action—the INA release movement and the RIN mutiny in 1945–1946, the Tebhaga upsurge in Bengal, Punnapra vayalar in Travancore and the Telengana peasant armed revolt in Hyderabad.

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In addition, there were numerous agitations, strikes and demonstrations all over the country. The mass pressure, thus generated, helped in bringing about the decisive shift in the British policy. Another important development was the change in the total objective situation worldwide as well as in India. Germany had been destroyed and Japan had surrendered after Hiroshima bombing in August 1945. Socially radical regimes with communist leadership or participation were emerging throughout Eastern Europe and seemed on the point of doing so even in France and Italy. The Chinese revolution was forging ahead, and a tremendous anti-imperialist wave was sweeping through South-East Asia with Vietnam and Indonesia resisting efforts to restore French and Dutch colonial rule. With a war weary army and people and a ravaged economy, Britain would have had to retreat; the labour victory further quickened the process somewhat.

The partition was to be effected in the following manner. If the members of legislative assemblies of Bengal and Punjab were to decide in favour of partition by a simple majority, a boundary commission, set up by the viceroy, would demarcate the appropriate boundaries. Sind and Baluchistan would decide which constituent assembly to join. In the NWFP, there was to be a referendum to ascertain whether it would join Pakistan or not. The Muslim-majority district of Sylhet was also to decide by referendum whether it would join East Bengal or would remain in Assam. The British Parliament would undertake legislation to transfer power before the end of 1947 to one or two successor authorities on a dominion status basis. This was to be done without any prejudice to the final decision of the constituent assembly on whether to stay in the Commonwealth or not.

The Muslim League accepted the plan within a week and so did the Congress. The Congress had no alternative, according to Abul Kalam Azad, but to accept the plan. It was important to arrest the drift towards anarchy and chaos.

The lesser evil had to be chosen. Partition was better than murder of the hapless citizens. Gandhi, who had till now steadfastly opposed the division of India, also supported the resolution. The task was enormous but time was running out. Punjab and Bengal were divided by two boundary commissions with Sir Cyril Radcliffe as the chairman of both. East Bengal, West Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan opted for Pakistan while West Bengal and East Punjab opted for India. Sylhet threw its lot with Pakistan. In the NWFP, Abdul Gaffar Khan and the Red Shirts demanded an independent Pakhtoonistan. This was found to be unacceptable. The Red Shirts did not participate in the plebiscite, which went in favour of joining Pakistan.

### 12.3.1 Some Personalities

Let us now briefly discuss some of the personalities associated with the freedom struggle.



## **Mahatma Gandhi**

Mahatma Gandhi was a great leader of our nation. He was born on 2 October 1869. His name was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. He was called to the Bar in England. After returning from England, he started his legal practice in India. On the invitation of Gokhale, he went to South Africa where the government subjected Indians to great discrimination and to the most humiliating treatment in the early part of the 20th century. He became renowned in South Africa as a champion of truth, non-violence and the dignity of the human being. He returned to India in 1914 and dedicated the remaining years of his life to the cause of his motherland. He decided to fight against the British Raj. The freedom struggle during this period was called the Gandhian Era (1920–1948). For the first time in the history of the world, a saint politician was leading millions of people of a dependent country and teaching them the practical use of techniques like non-violence, non-co-operation and civil disobedience. In 1942, Gandhi called upon the British to quit India, and the people were asked to fight for that. Five years after the British left India by granting complete independence (on 15 August 1947). On 30 January 1948, Gandhi was shot dead by Nathuram Godse, a Hindu nationalist.

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### **Jawaharlal Nehru**

Nerhu was a prominent freedom fighter, second only to Mahatma Gandhi in the final stages of the freedom struggle. After independence, Jawarharlal became India's first Prime Minister and continued to be one of the central figures in Indian politics before and after independence. The son of prominent independence leader and moderate Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru emerged as an eminent leader of the Indian independence movement under the tutelage of Mahatma Gandhi and served India as Prime Minister from its establishment as an independent nation in 1947 until his death in 1964. He is considered to be the architect of the modern Indian nation-state: a sovereign, socialist, secular, and democratic republic.

### **Motilal Nehru**

Motilal Nehru was a prominent figure of the early years of the Indian National Congress. A moderate, he became the President of the Congress twice, 1919–1920 and 1928–1929. He also joined the Swaraj faction and attempted to enter the British-sponsored councils.

### **Mohammad Ali Jinnah**

Mohammad Ali Jinnah was an Indian freedom fighter, preeminent leader of the Muslim League and went on to become the first Prime Minister of Independence Pakistan. In the early years of his political life, Jinnah had been the symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity, working within the Congress Party to bring independence to India. However, after becoming disenchanted by



the Congress, he joined the Muslim League and became the most important backer of Pakistan.

### C. Rajagopalachari

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C. Rajagopalachari was a prominent freedom fighter, member of the Indian National Congress, who went on to become the last Governor-General of India, serving till the time India became a republic. During the years in the freedom struggle, he favoured talks with both Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the Muslim League and proposed what later came to be known as the C. R. formula. After independence, he became a prominent politician from Southern India, founding the conservative Swatantra Party and became a fierce critic of Jawaharlal Nehru.

#### Check Your Progress

3. Why was Cripps' proposal rejected by Nehru and the Congress?
4. What was the aim of the British Cabinet Mission?
5. What did the Indian Independence Act declare?

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## 12.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. Where the Quit India Movement had the support of the masses, the movement was opposed by several political parties. Parties like Hindu Mahasabha and Communist Party of India opposed the movement and did not rally with the Congress.
2. Despite several leaders opposing the resolution, on 8 August 1942, Quit India resolution was passed at the Bombay session of All India Congress Committee (AICC).
3. Cripps' proposal was rejected by Nehru and the Congress, who instead demanded a complete cabinet government in which Indians had complete power of decision-making in India. The concept of independence of provinces was against the aim of the Congress to create a strong and united India with central governance.
4. The aim of the British Cabinet Mission of 1946 to India was to discuss and plan for the transfer of power from the British Raj to Indian leadership. The objective was to provide India with independence under Dominion status in the Commonwealth of Nations.
5. The Indian Independence Act declared that the British power over the Indian states would lapse on 15 August 1947. The states were allowed to join either India or Pakistan.

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## 12.5 SUMMARY

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- After the fall of Cripps' Mission, the Indian National Congress became stringent in its condition and passed a resolution in July 1942 demanding complete independence from British government; failing which the resolution proposed a massive civil disobedience against the government.
- Where the Quit India Movement had the support of the masses, the movement was opposed by several political parties. Parties like Hindu Mahasabha and Communist Party of India opposed the movement and did not rally with the Congress.
- Where on one hand the Quit India Movement was facing opposition at the national level, at the same time the movement was successful at the regional level where at several places locals had already starting rebelling against the British.
- The movement was primarily designed to keep the Congress party united. This further alarmed the British, who were already varying of Japanese army advancing on India-Burma border. In order to control the agitations, the British imprisoned Gandhi along with prominent members of Party's Working Committee (national leadership).
- After Japan attacked Pearl Harbour in December 1941, it was evident that India would be the next target of the Japanese forces. In April 1942, Britain sent Sir Stafford Cripps to India. He came with an offer for all provinces, for complete Dominion status with the right to leave the Empire and Commonwealth, after the war. It was also recommended by Cripps that any province that did not wish to join India could turn into an independent state.
- Cripps proposal was rejected by Nehru and the Congress, who instead demanded a complete cabinet government in which Indians had complete power of decision making in India. The concept of independence of provinces was against the aim of the Congress to create a strong and united India with central governance. These demands were rejected by the British Government. This followed the Congress's decision to support Gandhi's non-violent 'Quit India' campaign.
- The Gandhi-Jinnah talks are very important with regard to the political issues of India and the Pakistan Movement. The talks between the two great leaders started in response to the appeal of the general public for a settlement of Hindu- Muslim differences.
- The Government's Plan or the Mountbatten Plan dealt with the method by which power will be transferred from British to Indian hands, in

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particular the methods by which Muslim-majority provinces would choose whether they would remain in India or opt for the 'new entity' that is Pakistan.

- The Indian Independence Act declared that the British power over the Indian states would lapse on 15 August 1947. The states were allowed to join either India or Pakistan.

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### 12.6 KEY WORDS

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- **C.R. Formula:** It was a formula introduced by C. Rajagopalachari for settlement between the Congress and the Muslim League.
- **Resolution:** It is a formal expression of opinion or intention agreed on by a legislative body, committee, or other formal meeting, typically after taking a vote.
- **Imperialism:** It is a policy of extending a country's power and influence through diplomacy or military force.
- **Commission:** It refers to a group of people officially charged with a particular function.
- **Fascism:** It refers to an authoritarian and nationalistic right-wing system of government and social organization.

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### 12.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short Answer Questions

1. Write a note on the Cripps' Mission.
2. What was the role of Attlee's Announcement and Mountbatten Plan in the Partition of India?
3. What was the significance of Gandhi-Jinnah talks (1944)?

#### Long Answer Questions

1. Analyse the importance of the Quit India Movement. Why was it suppressed?
2. Discuss the events that led to the Partition of India in 1947.
3. Examine the Cabinet Mission Plan in detail.

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## 12.8 FURTHER READINGS

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**BLOCK – V**  
**SOCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS**  
**UNDER THE BRITISH RULE**

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**UNIT 13 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND  
RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS**  
**UNDER THE BRITISH**

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**Structure**

- 13.0 Introduction
- 13.1 Objectives
- 13.2 Social and Religious Reforms under the British: Social and Religious Condition of the People
- 13.3 Economic Condition of the People
- 13.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 13.5 Summary
- 13.6 Key Words
- 13.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 13.8 Further Readings

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**13.0 INTRODUCTION**

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India had been the hub of civilization based on trade and strong agrarian economy since ancient times. This enormous wealth had been the cause of envy of invaders who had been invading the region for thousands of years. Some of them were the Mongols, Central Asians, Arabs and especially the British.

The economic impact of the British rule was extensive and resulted in the degradation of the economy so much so that before the advent of the British, it was estimated that the economy of India represented 25 per cent of the global economy and by the time of their departure in 1947, this was reduced to 2 per cent.

The East India Company set up their economic roots in India by using various goods and services to lure the existing rulers and kings. The two decades of colonial rule harmed the country in various ways. The British determined trade and commerce. British ships carried most of the India's exports and imports, with tariffs and other charges that were determined by British governments. The British had control almost over all forms of trade—internal and external. Thus, with the advent of British rule in India, the entire structure of Indian industries changed.

Each industry has its own history of origin. The foundation of cotton industry was laid in western India at the same time as the jute industry was established in Bengal. Initially, the industries were dominated by Indian, but with the colonial rule, the power shifted into the hands of British. The entire marketing scenario in India changed. Now, the motive of the colonial Government India was to export raw materials from India and import manufactured goods in the Indian market. There was huge exploitation of the Indian economy and the Indian labourers. Also, the entire Indian market witnessed major structural change with time.

The British conquest had a pronounced and profound impact on India. There was hardly any aspect of the Indian economy and polity that was not changed for better or for worse during the entire period (1757–1947) of British rule. The drain of wealth theory which was propounded by early nationalists had both economic as well as political effects. The Government of India Act of 1919 and 1935 were regarded as the two milestones on the highway leading to a full responsible government. In terms of social and religious reform, the British carried out a number of reforms that were supported by Indian social reformers. We will begin the unit by discussing these social and religious reforms.

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### 13.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss social and religious reforms under the British period
- Explain the economic changes in India under British rule
- Examine the economic impact of British rule in India

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### 13.2 SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS REFORMS UNDER THE BRITISH: SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE

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During the 19th century, India witnessed socio-religious awakening. The Hindu mind that had been moulded for centuries by a fixed set of religious ideas and social conventions was exposed to new ideas and new ways of thinking. It was the result of the Western impact on India. As a result, the rigid rituals blindly followed in religion and traditional beliefs started losing their influence on the masses. The contact with the West opened the Hindu mind to the social evils and set in motion a number of social reform movements. Several traditional beliefs and practices were discarded and new customs, practices, institutions and values were adopted.

Indians who came under the influence of Western ideas and culture became aware of the existing social evils like child marriage, taboos against

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widow remarriage and inter-caste marriage, inter-caste dining, seclusion of women, and untouchability. This awareness led to a revolt against traditional beliefs and that was the first step towards reforms in social, religious and political spheres of life. This led to the launching of a series of social reform movements right from Raja Ram Mohan Roy down to Mahatma Gandhi. Ram Mohan Roy's Brahmo Samaj, Dayananda Saraswati's Arya Samaj, Vivekananda's Ramakrishna Mission, Annie Besant's Theosophical Society, Gandhi's Sarvodaya Movement and crusade against Untouchability, and many other movements, not only served to eradicate the social evils but also enlighten people regarding modern values.

### **Brahmo Samaj**

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a religious, social, and educational reformer who challenged the traditional Hindu culture and indicated the lines of progress for Indian society under British rule. He is rightfully called the 'Father of Modern India'. He, along with Dwarkanath Tagore founded the Brahmo Sabha in 1828, which engendered the Brahmo Samaj, an influential Indian socio-religious reform movement during the Bengal Renaissance. His influence was apparent in the fields of religion, politics, public administration, as well as education. He is known for his efforts to abolish the practice of *Sati*, the Hindu funeral practice in which the widow immolated herself on her husband's funeral pyre.

Roy was born in Radhanagore, Bengal, into the Rarhi Brahmin caste. His family background displayed religious diversity; his father Ramkanto Roy was a Vaishnavite, while his mother Tarinidevi was from a Shaivite family. This was unusual, for Vaishnavites did not commonly marry Shaivites at that time. Thus, one parent wanted him to be a scholar, a *sastrin*, while the other wanted him to have a career dedicated to the *laukik*, which was secular public administration.

Ram Mohan Roy's impact on modern Indian history concerned a revival of the ethics and principles of the Vedanta school of philosophy as found in the Upanishads. He preached about the unity of God, made early translations of Vedic scriptures into English, co-founded the Calcutta Unitarian Society, founded the Brahmo Samaj, and campaigned against Sati. He sought to integrate Western culture within Indian traditions. He established schools to modernize the system of education in India.

The Brahmo Samaj is the societal component of the Brahmo religion which is mainly practiced today as the *Adi Dharm*, after its eclipse in Bengal, consequent to the exit of the Tattwabodini Sabha from its ranks in 1859. It was one of the most influential religious movements responsible for the making of modern India. It was conceived in Kolkata in 1830 by Ram Mohan Roy and Dwarkanath Tagore as a reformation of the prevailing Brahminism of the time (specifically Kulin practices) and began the Bengal Renaissance



in the nineteenth century, pioneering all religious, social and educational advancement of the Hindu community. From the Brahmo Samaj springs Brahmoism, the most recent of India's faiths recognized by law as a distinct religion in Bangladesh, reflecting its non-syncretic 'foundation of Ram Mohan Roy's reformed spiritual Hinduism (contained in the 1830 Banian deed) and inclusion of root Hebraic-Islamic creed and practice'. After the publication of Hemendranath Tagore's *Brahmo Anusthan* (code of practice) in 1860 which formally divorced Brahmoism from Hinduism, the first Brahmo Samaj was founded in 1861 at Lahore by Pandit Nobin Chandra Roy.

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### Doctrines of the Brahmo Samaj

The following doctrines are common to all varieties and offshoots of the Brahmo Samaj:

- No faith in any scripture as an authority
- No faith in *Avatars*
- Denounce polytheism and idol-worship
- Against caste restrictions
- No faith in the doctrines of *karma* and rebirth

### Principles of Brahmo Samaj

The following principles are accepted by the vast majority of Brahmos today:

- **On God:** There is always Infinite Singularity—immanent and transcendent, singular author and preserver of existence. He who is manifested everywhere and in everything, in fire and in water, in the smallest plant to the mightiest oak.
- **On Being:** Being is created from Singularity. Being is renewed to Singularity. Being exists to be one (again) with Loving Singularity.
- **On Intelligent Existence:** Righteous actions alone rule Existence against chaos. Knowledge of pure conscience (light within) is the One (Supreme) ruler of Existence with no symbol or intermediary.
- **On Love:** Respect all creations and beings but never venerate (worship) them for only Singularity can be adored.

### Divisions of the Brahmo Samaj

After the death of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, serious differences regarding creed, rituals and the attitude of the Brahmos to the social problems, had arisen between Debendranath Tagore and Keshub Chandra Sen (who joined the Samaj in 1857). Tagore and Sen possessed radically different temperaments. As a result, in 1866, the Brahmo Samaj soon split up into two groups—the old conservatives rallying round Debendranath and the young reformists led by the Keshub Chandra. The two rival bodies—the Adi Brahmo Samaj

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(led by Debendranath) and the Brahmo Samaj of India (inspired and led by Keshub Chandra)—came into existence. The Brahmo Samaj of India started to carry out its spiritual and social reforms and achieved remarkable success within a short span of time. The Samaj now adopted a more radical and comprehensive scheme of social reforms. It placed greater stress on female emancipation, female education and a total abolition of caste distinctions. Its two important achievements were the formation of the Indian Reform Association in 1870 and the enactment of the Indian Marriage Act of 1872. The latter authenticated the inter-caste marriages. The blend of bhakti (intense devotional fervour) and Brahmoism rendered it more soothing, emotional and attractive to the common people.

Despite the vibrant progress of the Brahmo movement under Keshub, the Samaj underwent a second schism in May, 1878 when a group of Keshub Chandra Sen's followers deserted him to establish the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. The founders of this new outfit demanded the introduction of a democratic constitution in the church, which was not conceded by Keshub Chandra and his followers. The two other factors responsible for division in the ranks of the Brahmo Samaj of India were Keshub's doctrine of *adesha* (Divine Command) and the marriage of Keshub's daughter with the prince of Cooch Bihar allegedly in violation of the provision of the Indian Marriage Act of 1872. The Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, led by the veteran Derozian Shib Chandra Dev, consisted of some of the most talented youth of the time, such as Sivnath Shastri, Ananda Mohan Bose and Dwarkanath Ganguli. They were all great supporters of democracy and promptly framed a full-fledged democratic constitution based on universal adult franchise for their new organization. A number of them took active part in the activities of the Indian League (1878), the Indian Association (1878) and the nascent Indian National Congress.

### **Socio-religious Reforms by Raja Ram Mohan Roy**

In 1830, Ram Mohan Roy travelled to the United Kingdom from the Khejuri Port, which was then the sea port of Bengal. At the time, Roy was an ambassador of the Mughal emperor Akbar II, who conferred on him the title of 'Raja' to convince the British government to provide for the welfare of India and to ensure that Lord Bentick's regulation banning the practice of Sati was not overturned. Roy also visited France. Roy demanded property inheritance rights for women.

Roy's political background influenced his social and religious reforms of Hinduism. He wrote: 'The present system of Hindoos is not well calculated to promote their political interests. It is necessary that some change should take place in their religion, at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort.' Ram Mohan Roy's experience working with the British government taught him that Hindu traditions were often not respected or

thought as credible by Western standards; this affected his religious reforms. He wanted to legitimize Hindu traditions to his European acquaintances by proving that 'superstitious practices which deform the Hindoo religion have nothing to do with the pure spirit of its dictates'. The superstitious practices Ram Mohan Roy objected to include Sati, caste rigidity, polygamy and child marriage. These practices were often the reasons British officials claimed moral superiority over India. Ram Mohan Roy's ideas of religion sought to create a fair and just society by implementing humanitarian practices similar to Christian ideals and thus, legitimizing Hinduism in the modern world.

Roy died at Stapleton, which was then a village to the northeast of Bristol on 27 September 1833.

### **Raja Ram Mohan Roy: The Educationist**

Roy believed that education was imperative for social reforms. In 1817, in collaboration with David Hare, he set up the Hindu College at Calcutta. In 1822, Roy founded the Anglo-Hindu school, followed by the Vedanta College four years later, where he insisted that his teachings of monotheistic doctrines be incorporated with 'modern, western curriculum'; Vedanta College offered courses as a synthesis of Western and Indian learning. In 1830, he helped Alexander Duff in establishing the General Assembly's institution, by providing him the venue vacated by Brahma Sabha and getting the first batch of students. Ram Mohan also expressed himself strongly in favour of introducing a modern educational system in the country. Roy supported the induction of western learning into Indian education. He opposed the views of those who contended that the indigenous and Sanskrit system of education should be continued in India. In his view, the Sanskrit system of education would keep the country in darkness. He advocated the study of English, science, western medicine and technology.

Roy published magazines in English, Hindi, Persian, and Bengali. He published the *Brahmonical Magazine* in English in 1821. One notable magazine of his was the *Sambad Kaumudi*, published in 1821. In 1822, Ram Mohan published *Mirat-ul-Akbar* in the Persian language.

The *Brahmonical Magazine* ceased to exist after the publication of few issues. *Sambad Kaumudi*, a weekly magazine, covered topics such as freedom of press, induction of Indians into high ranks of service and separation of the judiciary from the executive. *Sambad Kaumudi* became bi-weekly in January 1830 and continued for thirty-three years.

He published the newspaper to register his protest against the introduction of Press Ordinance of 1823. The ordinance stated that a license from the Governor General in council would be mandatory to publish any newspaper. When the English Company censored the press, Ram Mohan composed two memorials against this in 1829 and 1830 respectively.

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Ram Mohan vehemently opposed the practice of Sati. But he was somewhat reluctant to have the practice abolished through legislation enacted by a foreign political authority. His method was to have the inhuman practice wiped out through educating and rousing public opinion against it. Roy wrote and argued ceaselessly against it towards attaining the objective. He knew that legislation by a foreign authority would drive the practice underground, which it actually did, in Bengal as elsewhere, for quite some time. But if a strong, knowledgeable public opinion could be created against the practice, it could be wiped out entirely.

Ram Mohan called upon his countrymen to discard idolatry and worship one true God. He did not believe in transmigration of souls and the incarnation of God appearing on earth. Ram Mohan questioned the religious sanction for the practice of Sati. He opposed child marriage, stood for the remarriage of widows, and for the equal rights of man and woman. While championing these causes, he maintained that neither Hindu religion nor the ancient history of the country justified the continuation of these social evils. Ram Mohan also opposed the system of hereditary priesthood. Under his guidance, the Brahmo Samaj spread these views and its members tried to practise them.

Ram Mohan translated some of the source literature of Hinduism into Bengali. Since then, the sacred books of the Hindus have ceased to be a secret preserve of the priestly class. He was, vigorously criticized by Hindu pundits.

### **Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar's Reform Movement**

Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar introduced a new technique of learning Sanskrit easily, and was responsible for a series of Sanskrit primers. He contributed immensely to the development of Bengali language and literature. Vidyasagar was also an educational and social reformer. It was he who had thrown the open the Sanskrit college to non-Brahmins and made English education accessible to the classical scholars. As the Government Inspector of schools, he founded as many as 35 schools for girls and 20 model schools during the British rule. He was an advocate of higher education for women.

Although never a Brahmo himself, Iswar Chandra resumed the best traditions of Ram Mohan's crusade against social evils and upliftment of the socially oppressed. Vidyasagar raised his voice against child marriage and polygamy, but his most memorable stand was his bold advocacy of widow remarriage in the teeth of strong conservative opposition. Although the *Bengal Spectator*, the mouthpiece of the Young Bengal, had advocated widow remarriage, it was Vidyasagar's bold advocacy of the cause that brought the issue into prominence. Although the government at first, preferred not to initiate any legislation in this regard, but Vidyasagar successfully persuaded it to pass the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act of 1856.

## **Arya Samaj: A Revivalist Movement**

The Arya Samaj movement was an outcome of the reaction to Western influences. It was revivalist in form but not in content. The founder of the movement, Swami Dayanand, rejected Western ideas and sought to revive the ancient religion of the Aryans.

Dayanand's idea was to unite India religiously, socially and nationally—Aryan religion to be the common religion of all, a classless and casteless society, and an India free from foreign rule. He considered the Vedas as India's 'Rock of Ages', the true original seed of Hinduism. His motto was 'Go back to the Vedas'. He gave his own interpretation of the Vedas. He disregarded the authority of the later Hindu scriptures like the *Puranas* and described them as the work of lesser men and responsible for the evil practices of idol worship and other superstitious beliefs in Hindu religion. Dayanand condemned idol worship and preached unity of Godhead. He decried untouchability and casteism as not sanctioned by the Vedas. He advocated widow remarriage and a high status for woman in society. His views were published in his famous work *Satyartha Prakash* (The True Exposition). While the Brahma Samaj and the Theosophical Society appealed to the English educated elite only, Dayanand's message was for the masses of India. The movement was popular in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

### **Arya Samaj's Programmes**

- **Education:** Dayananda wanted to revive the knowledge of Sanskrit literature. He made it the responsibility of Arya Samaj to run Gurkulas where the Indian young minds can be educated in terms of Indian culture and civilization. He wanted that these young men should be taught the value of high moral character. They should be nourished, brought up and developed in an atmosphere where patriotism was above everything else. Gurukuls should be centres of Vedic study and research. The Arya Samaj should rise against social evils.
- **Social reforms:** Dayanand felt that orthodoxy was bound to oppose such regeneration in Hindu society. He made it obligatory on the part of Arya Samajists to stand for widow re-marriage and oppose child marriage or caste system and other evils or similar institutions vehemently which had corrupted the Hindu society. Keeping in view the trend of the time, Dayanand asked the Arya Samajists to expose what was unwanted in the religious doctrines and books of other religions so that missionaries were demoralized, and they hesitated from condemning and criticizing Hindu religious teachings and philosophy. Dayanand propagated *shuddhi* by which he meant that those who wanted to willingly re-embrace Hindu religion should not be forbidden to do so.

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- **Democratic constitution:** Dayananand introduced elective system in the constitution of Arya Samaj which was then unknown to the religious institutions of those days. He laid down that Arya Samaj should be organized on democratic lines. Arya Samajists were obliged to see that their office-bearers were elected by their members and that there were no hereditary or nominated members.
- **Political reforms:** In the political field, Dayanand made the Arya Samajists aware that it was obligatory for them to preach and propagate the use of Swadeshi and also demand self-government. There should be decentralization of authority and a desire on the part of government to place individual above everything else.

Arya Samaj was responsible for political, social and economic resurgence in India. It had deep influence on many contemporaries. Most of the national leaders closely studied the doctrines of Arya Samaj. The influence of Arya Samaj is evident from the fact that among those who were influenced by it were persons like Lala Har Dayal, Har Krishan Lal, Krishan Lal, Krishan Verma, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindra Nath Tagore. In the north-west India, the influence of Arya Samaj was felt even in the very early stages of its development.

It was due to the work and contribution of Arya Samaj that ancient Indian glory was revived and a network of Gurukuls set up for educating young men and women of India. Arya Samaj acted as a check against the influence of Christianity on Hindu society.

### **Ramakrishna Mission**

This movement was started by Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa in Bengal. Sri Ramakrishna was a simple village priest. Yet the entire middle class, Western-educated Bengali community made him their national hero. Men like Keshav Chandra Sen, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (novelist), and Girish Chandra Ghosh (dramatist), regarded him as a saint. Ramakrishna, whose early upbringing had been among people untouched by English ideas, had stood as an inspiration to a whole generation.

The national awakening of the Indian people also found expression in the movement inspired by Ramakrishna. He sought religious salvation in the traditional ways of reincarnation, meditation and devotion (*bhakti*), in his search for religious truth or realization of God. He lived with mystics of other faiths, including Muslims and Christians. He emphasized that there were many roads to God and salvation and that service to mankind was service to God, for man was the embodiment of God.

It was his great disciple, **Swami Vivekananda**, who after the death of the saint founded the Ramakrishna Mission (1897) to propagate his teachings. The mission aimed at protecting Indians from materialistic influences of the



western civilization. It idealized Hinduism, including its practice of idol worship and polytheism. It aimed at spiritual conquest of the world through revived Hinduism.

The Mission had many branches in different parts of the country and carried on social services by opening schools, hospitals and dispensaries, orphanages, and libraries. The movement did not stress on personal salvation but on social good or social service.

Vivekananda intended to make the Mission an institution devoted entirely to the cause of national service. He established homes of social service and religious discipline in different parts of the country. These were used by the monks who were made to go through a period of training and discipline before they were permitted to be initiated into the order. *Sewa ashramas* had grown all over the country. The Ramakrishna Mission differed from other social and religious movements in the respect that it laid emphasis on that aspect of *Vedanta* which encouraged universalism in its religious conception. Vivekananda in his interpretation of Hindu religion raised it to a universal status.

Vivekananda's intrepid patriotism gave a new colour to the nationalist movement throughout India. Annie Besant described him as a 'warrior-monk', and he was clearly deeply influenced by the political thinking of his time. Vivekananda contributed immensely to the new awakening of India.

### **Theosophical Movement**

Theosophy (from Greek *theosophia* [*theos* meaning divine + *sophia* meaning wisdom]; literally 'divine wisdom') can be defined as a system that speculates or investigates direct knowledge related to the mysteries of living beings and the nature, specifically focusing on the character of divinity. Theosophy is also regarded as a fragment of the larger discipline of esotericism, which refers to concealed knowledge or wisdom which can enlighten an individual and provide salvation. A theosophist seeks to learn about the mysteries of the universe and the factors that bond the universe with human beings and the celestial world. Theosophy aims to explore the source of eternity and humanity (theogony and anthropogony), which includes, end of the world, life and humanity (eschatology). This study leads to a rational discovery about the purpose and source of the universe (cosmogony). The hieroglyphs of nature are investigated into, by a theosophist (insights, or poetic interpretations, in flowers, rainbows). Theosophy makes use of a technique of interpretation, which is based upon a particular myth or revelation. This revelation applies dynamic thinking to extract symbolic significances and to pursue knowledge until these mysteries are completely understood.

The Theosophical Society was established as an organization in 1875, for developing spiritual tenets and seeking the truth. This process is

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called Theosophy. The original organization underwent many divisions and alterations and resulted in (as of 2011) many successors. Today, theosophy is a dynamic school of philosophy, which has promoted other mystical, philosophical and religious schools of thoughts after undergoing various divisions.

### **History of the Theosophical Society**

The idea of forming the Theosophical Society was first proposed in New York City on 8 September 1875. However, this society was brought into official existence in November 1875, by Helena Blavatsky, Henry Steel Olcott, William Quan Judge and others. The fundamental goal of this Society was ‘study and elucidation of Occultism, the Cabala’. A few years later, Olcott and Blavatsky came to India and set up its international headquarters at Adyar, in Madras (Chennai). The study of religions of the East also interested them, so they included them in the schema of the Society. Many exercises were undertaken to develop the objectives of the Society. The objectives that were developed are as follows:

- Forming of a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity, without discrimination on the basis of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour
- Encouraging learning of comparative religion, philosophy and science
- Investigating the unexplained laws of nature and hidden strength of man
- The Society was structured like a non-sectarian body. The constitution and rules of the Theosophical Society were as follows:
- The Theosophical Society is perfectly non-sectarian and requires no obligatory belief, faith or creed to qualify as its member.
- However, anyone who applies for membership, or becomes its member should sympathize with the efforts directed at creating a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity. This view of the Society was formulated again in a resolution that the General Council of the Theosophical Society passed on 23 December 1924.

One of the main tenets of philosophy that the Society promoted was a complicated doctrine of The Intelligent Evolution of All Existence, which occurred on a cosmic scale. This comprised both, physical and non-physical features of both, the known and unknown aspects of the universe. All its constituent parts were affected, irrespective of their size or significance. The Secret Doctrine of the work of art of Helena Blavatsky propagated this concept in 1888. This view stated that the evolution of humanity on the Earth (and beyond) was part of the larger cosmic evolution. A hidden spiritual hierarchy administers this evolution. This hierarchy is also referred to as the Masters of Ancient Wisdom. Advanced spiritual beings top this hierarchy. The Theosophical Society was represented by Blavatsky, as one of the many

attempts by this hidden hierarchy to guide humanity. Humanity is guided towards its final and incontrovertible goal of evolution, which is achievement of excellence and conscious and willing partaking in the process of evolution. An earthly infrastructure is required for these attempts to succeed (such as the Theosophical Society). Finally, it was agreed that a number of Mahatmas, who were members of the hierarchy were inspiring the Society.

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### **Divisions in the Theosophical Society**

In 1891, after Helena Blavatsky died, the leaders of the Society initially seemed to work in unison. However, this harmony was short-lived. Judge broke off with Olcott and Annie Besant in 1895, after charging both of them with forgery of letters from the Mahatmas. The larger American section of the society was taken by him. The original organization, whose leaders were Olcott and Besant, is still intact in India under the title, the Theosophical Society—Adyar. Judge's organization further split into two factions, one was led by Katherine Tingley and the other was headed by Judge's secretary, Ernest Temple Hargrove. Hargrove's faction does not exist now. However, Tingley's faction is now referred to as 'the Theosophical Society-International Headquarters, Pasadena, California'. In 1909, another faction had broken away from Tingley's faction and formed the United Lodge of Theosophists or ULT.

In 1902, The German/Austrian division of the Theosophical Society appointed Rudolf Steiner as its General Secretary. He was more inclined towards the West, making the organization very different from its Adyar headquarters. The German division came into existence after serious philosophical conflicts with Annie Besant and other members of the International leadership. These conflicts were regarding the spiritual importance of Jesus. Most of the German and Austrian members disassociated themselves from the original Society in 1913 and set up the Anthroposophical Society. The branches of the latter are still operational in many countries around the world today, including the US and Canada.

### **The 'World Teacher'**

In 1889, Blavatsky added another objective to those that already existed. She made a public declaration that the Society was also set up to create a 'World Teacher' for humanity. She said that human beings should be receptive towards this World Teacher. The Theosophical doctrine of the 'World Teacher' was a manifested aspect of a sophisticated spiritual entity (the *Maitreya*) that periodically appeared on the Earth, to direct the evolution of mankind. The mission of this spiritual entity was to simplify the knowledge that could help humanity evolve in a better way, for modern human beings to understand. When Besant took over as president of the Society in 1907, she believed that the World Teacher would emerge sooner than Blavatsky had predicted (last quarter of the 20th century).

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### **Jiddu Krishnamurti**

Charles Webster Leadbeater was one of the people who expected that Lord *Maitreya* would imminently appear as the 'World Teacher'. Leadbeater, was an influential theosophist and occultist. In 1909, he came across Jiddu Krishnamurti, an adolescent Indian boy, who according to Leadbeater, was a prospective contender for the vehicle of the 'World Teacher'. Some months earlier, Krishnamurti's family had moved to the headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Adyar, India. After he came to limelight, the Society took Krishnamurti under it and he underwent extensive grooming to prepare him for his mission. However, by 1925, Krishnamurti had started to deviate from the course assigned to him by the leaders of the Theosophical Society in Adyar and several other Theosophists. In 1929, the Order of the Star was destroyed by him in public. The Order of the Star was a global society that was established by the leadership of the Theosophical Society to prepare the world for the advent of the *Maitreya*. He also discarded the role of the 'vehicle' played by him, for the 'World Teacher'. Finally, he resigned from the Theosophical Society, though individual members of the Society were still his friends. The remaining part of his life was spent by him in travelling across the world as an independent speaker. He became well-known for the originality of his thoughts on subjects like spirituality, philosophy and psychology.

### **Controversy and Racial Beliefs**

According to Helena Blavatsky, the evolution of humanity comprised of a range of stages known as Root Races. Aryans belonged to the Fifth Root Race (out of seven). However, Root Races are not the same as ethnicities. Evolutionary stages of the whole humanity are represented by them. Every successive Root Race is more developed than the previous one. Blavatsky's teachings pointed out that the Atlantis was the centre for the earlier stage of evolution, in the period of the Fourth Root-Race. At that time, the Aryan Root Race had progressed only one more step in the evolutionary progression. Finally, the more spiritual Sixth Root Race superseded it.

Anthropology, sociology and other faculties have defined race in a more comparative and limited way. No person or group was considered as superior by Blavatsky. The idea of common origin and destiny for every human being and the principle of universal brotherhood, as the First Object of the Theosophical Society, were promoted by Blavatsky. Religious tolerance and inclusiveness were also asserted by her. She said, 'Theosophists, collectively respect the Bible as much as they do the sacred scriptures of other people, finding in it the same eternal truths as in the Vedas, the Zend-Avesta, the Tripitakas, etc.' Additionally, Austrian/German ultra-nationalist, Guido von List and his followers, later selected parts of Blavatsky's occult philosophy and blended them with ideas of nationalism and fascism. This system of

thinking was referred to as Ariosophy. A few of the researchers, who traced the connection of Ariosophy with Theosophy, stated that the latter primarily depends on 'intellectual expositions of racial evolution'. Nevertheless, Blavatsky said in *The Key to Theosophy*, 'The Society is a philanthropic and scientific body for the propagation of the idea of brotherhood on practical instead of theoretical lines.'

### **Related Individuals and Organizations**

Other organizations that have been associated with the original Theosophical Society, its philosophy, leaders, branches, or descendant organizations, at some or the other point of time are as follows:

- Agni Yoga
- Ananda College
- Anthroposophy
- Alice Bailey
- The Bridge to Freedom
- Church Universal and Triumphant
- James Cousins
- Halcyon, California
- Hugh Dowding
- 'I AM' Activity
- Anna Kingsford
- Liberal Catholic Church
- Order of the Temple of the Rosy Cross
- Elizabeth Clare Prophet
- Nilakanta Sri Ram
- Jorge Ángel Livraga Rizzi
- Schola Philosophicae Initiationis
- Share International
- Theosophical Society of the Arya Samaj
- Brother XII (Edward Arthur Wilson)

### **Miscellaneous Reform Movements**

Let us discuss some other reforms movements in India.

**Young Bengal Movement:** It was started by an Anglo-Indian, Henry Vivian Derozio, considered to be the first nationalist poet of India. He became a teacher at Hindu College (Calcutta) in 1826. His followers were known as Derozians. Unlike the Brahma Samajists, the Derozians were radical in their approach.

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**Rahnumai Muzdyayan:** An Association for the socio-religion reform among the Parsis was founded in 1851 at Bombay by Dadabhai Naoroji, Furdunji Naoroji, K.R. Cama and S.S. Bengales. They opposed social practices such as child marriage, dependence on astrology and orthodoxy in the Parsi society in India. *Rust Gofar* (Truth Teller), published in Gujrati, was issued by Dadabhai Naoroji. It was the mouthpiece of this association.

**Singh Sabha:** It was founded in 1873 at Amritsar by Thakur Singh Sandhwalia and Giani Gian Singh. It had the following objectives:

- To introduce western education within the Sikh Community
- To counter the proselytizing activities of the Christian missionaries as well as Hindu revivalists
- To open Khalsa schools and colleges throughout Punjab. The Akali Movement was an off-shoot of the Singh Sabha.

### Prarthana Samaj

The Prarthana Samaj critically examined the relations between contemporary social and cultural systems and religious beliefs and gave priority to social reforms as compared to the political changes already initiated by the British government. Their comprehensive reform movement has led many impressive projects of cultural change and social reform in Western India, such as the improvement of women and depressed classes, an end to the caste system, abolition of child marriage and infanticide, educational opportunities for women and remarriage of widows. Its success was guided by Sir Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar, a noted Sanskrit scholar, Atmaram Pandurang, Narayan Chandavarkar, and Justice Mahadev Govinda Ranade. Ranade emphasized that 'the reformer must attempt to deal with the whole man and not to carry out reform on one side only'. 'The social organism in India,' according to Ranade, 'shows a growth which should not be ignored and cannot be forcibly suppressed'. Maharshi Vitthal Ramji Shinde championed the complete eradication of caste and untouchability. He founded the first depressed classes mission.

By comparison with the parallel Brahmo Samaj of Bengal and the ideals of rational or theistic belief and social reform, the Prarthana Samaj(ists) were followers of the great religious tradition of the Maratha saints like Namdev, Tukaram and Ramdas (the guru of Shivaji). The Brahmo Samaj founders examined many world religions, including ancient Vedic texts, which subsequently were not accepted to be infallible or divine. Although the adherents of Prarthana Samaj were devoted theists, they also did not regard the Vedas as divine or infallible. They drew their inspiration from the Hindu scriptures and used the hymns of the old Marathi 'poet-saints' in their prayers. Their ideas trace back to the devotional poems of the *Vitthalasas* part of the *Vaishnava bhakti* devotional movements of the thirteenth century

in southern Maharashtra. The Marathi poets had inspired the movement of resistance against the Mughals, but, beyond religious concerns, the primary focus of the Prarthana Samaj was on social and cultural reforms.

### **Doctrines of Prarthana Samaj**

The Prarthana Samaj was started in Bombay. It was inspired by the Brahmo Samaj but was milder and less radical in its principles. Theistic worship comes first, followed closely by social reforms— abandonment of caste, widow remarriage, female education and the abolition of child marriage. Many members hold the view that definite beliefs and theological thought are not necessary for a free theistic movement. Others have produced theological and devotional books. Though their theism is based on ancient Hindu texts, they have practically given up the inspiration of the Vedas and belief in transmigration. The Samaj defines its faith as follows:

- God is the creator of this universe. He is the only true God; there is no other God beside him. He is eternal, spiritual, infinite, the store of all good, all joy, without parts, without form, one without a second, the ruler of all, all-pervading, omniscient, almighty, merciful, all-holy and the saviour of sinners.
- His worship alone leads to happiness in this world and the next.
- Love and reverence for him, an exclusive faith in him, praying and singing to him spiritually with these feelings and doing the things pleasing to him constitute His true worship.
- To worship and pray to images and other created objects is not a true mode of divine adoration.
- God does not incarnate himself and there is no one book which has been directly revealed by God or is wholly infallible.
- All men are His children; therefore they should behave towards each other as brethren without distinction.

This doctrine was very similar to the Brahmo Samaj but with one significant difference. The Prarthana Samaj bases its worship on the devotional poems of the *Vitthalas*, especially those of Tukaram.

### **History of Prarthana Samaj**

Two secret societies preceded the Prarthana Samaj. We know very little about the Gupta Sabha. This was followed in 1849 by the Paramahansa Sabha established by Ram Balkrishna Jaykar and others. Members had to eat bread baked by a Christian and drink water brought by a Muslim. The Samaj had about a thousand members in Poona, Ahmedabad, Ratnagiri and elsewhere in western India. Orthodox opposition resulted in the documents being stolen in 1860 and the names of the members being made public. This

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led to widespread panic. Some members converted to Christianity, while others held steadfast to their convictions. The ones who held on to their religious convictions went on to establish the Prarthana Samaj in Bombay in 1867. These founder members were educated Indians and their leader was Dr Atmaram Pandurang (1823-1898), a personal friend of Dr Wilson, who founded the Wilson College in 1835. The Brahmo Samaj made an important impression on these men. In 1864, Keshub Chander Sen visited Bombay, and again in 1868. In 1872, Pratap Chandra, another great Brahmo, visited at the invitation of the Prarthana Samaj. During his visit, a plan was made for the Prarthana Samaj to become a branch of the Brahmo Samaj. This was prevented by Mahadeo Ranade by pointing out the splits among the Brahmos of Bengal which could be echoed in Bombay, while Dr Bhandarkar did not approve of the extremism and Christian bias of Keshub Chandra Sen. Similarly, when Dayananda Saraswati came to Bombay in 1874, there was great interest in his lectures and the next year he founded the Arya Samaj in Bombay. However, his ideas on the Vedas stopped the Prarthana Samaj from joining him. Hence, the Prarthana Samaj continued as an independent reform movement. In Bombay, this was the most important and well-organized movement of the time as it was sponsored by leading personalities.

The mildness of the Prarthana Samaj has meant that there have never been groups of missionaries as in the Brahmo Samaj. With only one or two missionaries, the movement did not spread extensively. However, the mildness of the Samaj has been appreciated in South India, particularly in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, where the Prarthana Samaj was the most popular of all such institutions.

The Samaj ran the Young Theists Union, the Postal Mission to send religious literature, the *Subodh Patrika*, night schools, and a ladies association. It is also associated with The Students Brotherhood, an Orphanage and Foundling Asylum in Pandharpur and the organization of the Social Reform Movement and the Depressed Classes Mission. Every year an All-India Theistic

Conference is attended by both the Brahmo Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj.

Though the Prarthana Samaj is opposed to image worship, in practice, members follow the ceremonies of Hinduism though regarding them as of no religious importance. Thus, Samaj members can still practice image worship in their homes and be part of the caste system. It is said that the Prarthana Samaj paid allegiance to Hinduism with a protest. There are no official figures for the number of adherents within the movement. They are mainly to be found in west and south India.



## Muslim Reform Movements

*Social, Economic and  
Religious Conditions  
Under the British*

Some of the Muslim reform movements are discussed below:

### 1. Aligarh Movement

The Aligarh Movement was a prominent Muslim socio-religious movement in India and was led by Sayyid Ahmad Khan. Sayyid Ahmad Khan was born into a prestigious family of Delhi and spent his childhood in and out of the Mughal court. He studied Arabic and Persian according to the older pattern and also studied the work of Shah Wali Ullah. Though he did not receive any religious education, he demonstrated a personality more akin to a courtier or government official than to an Ulama. Sayyid Ahmad Khan believed that the future of Islam rested with the fortunes of Muslims, particularly those residing in northern India. He started to attract others with his writings and soon founded a variety of public forums for spreading his ideas. He soon emerged as a prominent leader of the Muslim community.

Sayyid Ahmad Khan believed that the dilemma of the Muslims in India laid in an education that disseminated elements of English knowledge within the Islamic context. Aiming at solving this dilemma, he planned to open an educational institution that would educate the Muslims properly. He established the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh in June, 1875. It developed into the Aligarh Muslim University in 1890. The main objective of Sayyid Ahmad Khan behind founding the institution was to supply educated, honest, public-spirited leaders able to work with the English government and to protect the Muslim community.

The Aligarh Movement was actually an educational movement with a view to purify Islam and it marked a sharp break with previous attempts to purify Islam and return it to its past glory. The vision of the movement was to create an administrative elite class that would govern in cooperation with the British rather than focus its attention on the Ulama. Through the 1850s, Syed Ahmed Khan began developing a strong passion for education. While pursuing studies of different subjects including European jurisprudence, Sir Syed began to realize the advantages of Western-style education, which was offered at newly established colleges across India.

Despite being a devout Muslim, Sir Syed criticized the influence of traditional dogma and religious orthodoxy, which had made most Indian Muslims suspicious of British influences. He became increasingly concerned for the future of the Muslim communities. A scion of Mughal nobility, Sir Syed had been reared in the finest traditions of Muslim élite culture and was aware of the steady decline of Muslim political power across India. The animosity between the British and Muslims before and after the rebellion (Independence War) of 1857 threatened to marginalize Muslim communities across India

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for many generations. He intensified his work to promote cooperation with British authorities, promoting loyalty to the empire amongst Indian Muslims. Committed to working for the upliftment of Muslims, Sir Syed founded a modern *madrassa* in Muradabad in 1859; this was one of the first religious schools to impart scientific education.

The Aligarh Movement was successful in spreading western education among Muslims without weakening their commitment to Islam. The second task it undertook was to introduce social reforms in the Muslim society. The Aligarh Movement strived to evolve the Muslim community as a distinct social and cultural community, on the lines of modernism. The Aligarh Movement was based on the interpretation of the *Quran*. It tried to blend Islam and the modern liberal culture. Inspired by the Aligarh Movement, several progressive movements came up in Bombay, Punjab, Hyderabad and other places.

### 2. Wahabi Movement

It was started by Syed Ahmad of Rae Bareli (1786–1831). The Wahabi Movement was basically a revivalist movement, started in India under the influence of Abdul Wahab of Arabia and Shah Waliullah's teachings. The aim of this movement was the purification of Islam and conversion of Dar-ul-Harb into Dar-ul-Islam. The movement condemned all changes and innovations in Islam. The movement held that the return to the true spirit of Islam was the only way to get rid of the socio-political oppression. Sithana in North-western border was its headquarter. In the revolt of 1857, the Wahabis played a notable role in spreading anti-British sentiments. The period between 1863-65 witnessed a series of trials in which all the principal leaders of the Wahabi movement were arrested. One of the most respected leader of the Movement, Ibrahim Mandal of Islampur, was convicted for organizing movement at Raj Shahi in the Raj Mahal trial (1870) and was sentenced for life and was send off to the Andamans. However, he was released by Lord Lytton in 1878. Historians are of the opinion that though the Wahabis spread anti-British sentiments, they did not have exact participation in anti- British Military activities.

#### Check Your Progress

1. In which year was the Brahma Samaj split into two groups?
2. Name one notable magazine published by Ram Mohan Roy.
3. When was the Widow Remarriage Act passed?
4. In which year was the Theosophical Society established?
5. When was Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College established?

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## 13.3 ECONOMIC CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE

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*Social, Economic and  
Religious Conditions  
Under the British*

The economic impact of British rule was as follows:

- **Commercialization of agriculture:** Under the new system, the peasant produced mainly for the market, which with the steady improvement of means of transport and expanding operations of trading capital under British Rule, became available to him. He did so with a view to realizing maximum cash, primarily to pay land revenue to the state which was fixed fairly high.

This led to the practice of growing specialized crops by the peasants. Thus, the land in groups of villages came to be solely used, because of its special suitability, for the cultivation of a single agricultural crop such as cotton, jute, wheat, sugarcane, oil-seeds, indigo, opium, etc. Further, the commercialization made the agriculturist dependent, for the sale of his product, on the middleman, i.e., the merchant. The merchant, by his superior economic position took full advantage of the poverty of the peasant. The poor peasant, having no economic reserves and confronted by the revenue claims of the Government and increasingly also by the claim of the usurer, had to sell his product to the middle man at the harvest time. This transaction, originating in sheer necessity, brought a much less amount to the peasant than he would have and if he could wait. The Middleman thus, appropriated a very large share of the profit.

- **Growth of rural indebtedness:** There was progressive increase in indebtedness of Indian agriculturists under British rule. It swelled from decade to decade. After 1880, rural indebtedness rose at such a geometrical rate that it led to the observation: 'One-third of the landholding classes are deeply and inextricably in debt and at least an equal proportion are in debt, though not beyond the power of recovering themselves.' One of the most important reasons for the growth of rural indebtedness was that over 75 per cent of the peasants could not earn even bare minimum livelihood from land.

Under the new system, land became a marketable commodity. While giving the peasant the freedom to mortgage or sell his land, it also gave the creditor of the indebted peasant freedom to seize the latter's land. In the conditions of poverty engendered by the new economic environs, more and more land came to be transferred to the money-lender in lieu of the debt the peasant owed to him. Large-scale expropriation of the Indian peasantry leading to the widespread growth of absentee landlordism also took place.

The situation of rural indebtedness was so grim that it led die Moplahs in Malabar region to revolt only decades after the province came under the Company's rule.

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- **Impoverishment of the peasantry:** High revenue demands led to devastation, as it led to poverty and the deterioration of agriculture in the 19th century. It forced the peasant to fall into the clutches of the money-lender. If the peasant could not pay the money, his land was sold-off. Gradually more land passed into the hands of money-lenders, merchants, rich peasants and other moneyed classes. The growing commercialization also helped the money-lender cum merchant to exploit the cultivator. The peasant was forced to sell his produce just after the harvest and at whatever price he could get as he had to meet in time the demands of the government, the landlord and the money-lender. Added to the above factors, was the increase of population pressure on agriculture weighed on the peasants heavily.

Thus, agriculture began to deteriorate by showing low yields per acre, resulting from the overcrowding of agriculture, excessive land revenue demand, growth of landlordism, increasing indebtedness and the lowering improvement of the cultivation. At a time, when agriculture all over the world was being modernized, the Indian agriculture, was technologically stagnating. It also increased the incidence of the famines. People died in the millions whenever drought or floods caused failure of crops and produced scarcity.

- **Disruption of Traditional Economy and the Decline of Artisans and Craftsmen:** As far as the traditional handicraft industry and the production of objects of art were concerned, India was already far ahead of other countries in the world.

To quote Vera Anstey, ‘up to the 18th century, the economic condition of India was relatively advanced, and Indian methods of production and industrial and commercial organization could stand comparison with those in vogue in any other part of the world.’ Spinning and weaving and other handicrafts had provided employment to millions of men and women. These handicrafts provided a vibrant economy in India. But the policies of the East India Company not only snatched the foreign markets but also its internal markets by a system of inland custom and transit duties. Besides the import of foreign manufacture on a large scale resulted in a steep decline in the sale of Indian products. The decline of the traditional industries with the absence of new industries to take its place worsened the economic life of the country. This deprived millions of workers of employment.

These workers fell upon agriculture as other avenues of employment. The foreign rulers also looked upon India as ‘a plantation, growing raw produce to be shipped by British Agents in British ships to be worked into Fabrics by British skill and capital, and to be re-exported to the Dependency by British merchants to their corresponding British firms in India and elsewhere.’

Another reason of the decline of the indigenous industries was that while the English market for Indian manufactures was progressively narrowed through prohibitions and extremely high tariffs, the Indian markets were thrown wide open to British manufactures by imposing free trade on India.

- **Fear of competition:** Another cause was the competition faced by the Indian industries. Before the advent of the British, these industries did not have any fear of competition. Hence, upgrading of production technology on a continuous basis did not take place in India as it did in Europe making the Indian products less competitive. This led to the process of deindustrialization in India.
- **Changes in agrarian life:** The condition of the peasantry was affected by several factors. First, there was a steady increase in population 'due to the establishment of peaceful conditions amongst a people used to war, and possessing high natural fertility.' This led to increasing pressure on land, which was accelerated by the ruin of cottage industries resulting from the growing import of British manufacturers. The average size of the holdings was reduced. Secondly, the revenue systems pressed heavily on the peasantry. Thirdly, the introduction of sophisticated law, the establishment of regular law courts, the improvement of communications, the increasing flow of British goods, etc. exposed the rural areas to steadily increasing interference from outside. The net results were the gradual disappearance of economic self-sufficiency and 'the gradual transfer of authority within the village from the village elders to the agents of the Government.' Their gradual disappearance led to a radical socio-economic transformation of rural life.
- **Disintegration of village communities and emergence of the Indian middle class:** The land revenue system, established by the British in India, led to the break-up of that ancient social framework within which the agricultural population had lived for centuries. 'The social bonds that had held different elements of the rural society together were snapped.' Co-operation was replaced by competition. The collective life of the village gave way to, individualism. Agricultural production, instead of catering to the needs of the village population, came to be adapted to the requirements of the external markets. The opening of the village to foreign imports gave a deadly blow to the village crafts and industries.
- **Growth of foreign capital and the rise of modern industries in India:** In terms of chronology, the plantation industries of indigo, tea and coffee were the first to be introduced in India. They were exclusively European in ownership, and did not entirely depend on modern mechanical contrivances. The coming of railways heralded the entry of modern machines in India and during the 1850's cotton

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textile, jute, and coal mining industries were started in India. The two fields were primarily exclusive preserve of European capital.

The trend was towards a dependent and underdeveloped colonial economy. The railways comprised the single biggest item of British capital investment in India, but much of its burden was shifted to the Indian taxpayers through the peculiar system of 'private investment at public risk'. The bulk of railway equipment was imported from England and about 90 percent of the superior railway posts were manned by the British. A substantial part of the income generated through railway and other industrial investment in plantations, mines, banking and insurance, shipping, jute mills, etc. was siphoned out. It has been estimated that before 1914 nearly 97% of British capital investments in India was diverted towards completion of government projects (railways, road transport, etc.), plantation *industry* (tea, coffee, rubber, etc), and development of financial houses (banks, insurance companies, etc.). The foreign banks in India held nearly three-fourths of the total bank deposits. Many multinationals operated their subsidiary companies in India, and penetrated into almost every sector of the Indian economy.

Thus, the predominant control of British finance capital retarded the tempo of free industrial growth and general economic development in India. The Indian nationalist movement which stood for a programme of rapid industrial development of the country as a precondition for the material, social and cultural advance of the Indian people, was consequently very critical of the attitude of British finance capital and the economic policies of the Government.

- **Change in the structure of India's trade:** The expansion of British trade in India not only proved ruinous to Indian trade and industry, but also radically changed the structure of India's trade. India was forced to admit British imports either free or at nominal rates of duties, while Indian manufactures of products continued to be subjected to high import duties in England. India, which was the world's principal producer and exporter of fabrics in the first half of the eighteenth century, was in the next century reduced to the position of one of the largest consumers of foreign manufactures-cotton textiles being the major item of import. Silk and woollen fabrics, machinery and metal manufactures were some of the other commodities of import into India. (Competition with imported goods destroyed the Indian industry), deprived the artisans of their income and narrowed down the avenues of employment for labour. On the other hand, the exports which came to consist of raw cotton, raw silk, food grains, opium, indigo, and jute, denuded the country of her agricultural surplus, raised the prices of raw materials and 'laid the foundation of future agricultural shortage and famines which held the country in their grip over the next one hundred years.'



### **Check Your Progress**

6. What was the most important reason for the growth of rural indebtedness?
7. What was the result of the land revenue system?

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## **13.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS**

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1. The Brahma Samaj split up into two groups in 1866.
2. One notable magazine of Ram Mohan Roy was Sambad Kaumudi.
3. The Hindu Widow Remarriage Act was passed in 1856.
4. The Theosophical Society was established in 1875.
5. The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College was established in June, 1875.
6. One of the most important reasons for the growth of rural indebtedness was that over 75 per cent of the peasants could not earn even bare minimum livelihood from land.
7. The land revenue system, established by the British in India, led to the break-up of that ancient social framework within which the agricultural population had lived for centuries.

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## **13.5 SUMMARY**

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- Raja Ram Mohan Roy along with Dwarkanath Tagore founded the Brahma Sabha in 1828, which engendered the Brahma Samaj, an influential Indian socio-religious reform movement during the Bengal Renaissance.
- In 1866, the Brahma Samaj soon split up into two groups.
- Ram Mohan vehemently opposed the practice of Sati.
- Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar's most memorable stand was his bold advocacy of widow remarriage in the teeth of strong conservative opposition.
- Vidyasagar successfully persuaded the colonial government to pass the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act in 1856.
- The Arya Samaj movement was an outcome of the reaction to Western influences. It was revivalist in form but not in content.



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- The founder of the Arya Samaj movement, Swami Dayanand, rejected Western ideas and sought to revive the ancient religion of the Aryans.
- Arya Samaj was responsible for political, social and economic resurgence in India.
- Swami Vivekananda, who after the death of the Ramakrishna Paramhamsan, founded the Ramakrishna Mission (1897) to propagate his teachings.
- The Theosophical Society was established as an organization, in 1875, for developing spiritual tenets and seeking the truth.
- The Prarthana Samaj reform movement has led many impressive projects of cultural change and social reform in Western India, such as the improvement of women and depressed classes, an end to the caste system, abolition of child marriage and infanticide, educational opportunities for women and remarriage of widows.
- The Aligarh movement was a prominent Muslim socio-religious movement in India and was led by Sayyid Ahmad Khan.
- Sayyid Ahmad Khan established the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh in June, 1875 which later developed into the Aligarh Muslim University in 1890.
- The Aligarh Movement was successful in spreading western education among Muslims without weakening their commitment to Islam. The second task it undertook was to introduce social reforms in the Muslim society.
- The Wahabi Movement was basically a revivalist movement, started in India under the influence of Abdul Wahab of Arabia and Shah Waliullah's teachings.
- The aim of the Wahabi movement was the purification of Islam and conversion of Dar-ul-Harb into Dar-ul-Islam.
- Initially, India was a self-sufficient country. It was rich in all natural and agricultural resources but when the British landed in India they succeeded in carving out a strong Empire here.
- The British ruled for two centuries and brought tremendous changes in the country's economic system.

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## 13.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Reform Movements:** They are those movements that endeavour to introduce certain necessary reforms in some specific areas.
- **Workmanship:** It refers to the degree of skill with which a product is made or a job done.

- **Indentured Labour:** They refer to employees within a system of unfree labour who is bound by a signed or forced contract (indenture) to work for a particular employer for a fixed time.

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## 13.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short Answer Questions

1. Write a short note on Ramkrishna Mission.
2. Write a short note on the following:
  - Young Bengal Movement
  - Rahnumai Muzdyayan
  - Singh Sabha
3. Trace the history of the Prarthana Samaj.

### Long Answer Questions

1. Write an essay on the Brahmo and Arya Samaj movement.
2. Discuss the Theosophical society with reference to: (a) History of the Theosophical society and its philosophy (b) Divisions within the society (c) Concept of 'World Teacher'.
3. Describe the Muslim reform movements.
4. Describe some of the economic changes brought in by the British.

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## **UNIT 14 DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION UNDER THE BRITISH RULE**

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### **Structure**

- 14.0 Introduction
- 14.1 Objectives
- 14.2 Development of Education
- 14.3 Growth of Local Self-government
- 14.4 Answers to Check Your Progress Questions
- 14.5 Summary
- 14.6 Key Words
- 14.7 Self Assessment Questions and Exercises
- 14.8 Further Readings

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### **14.0 INTRODUCTION**

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Initially, the East India Company did not think that it was its duty to impart education to Indians. It allowed the old system of education to continue. Pathshalas, which were open to all, imparted a special type of education geared towards meeting the requirements of the rural society. Muslims attended Madrasas. Higher education was confined primarily to upper castes. This system of education was eventually changed by the British. The need for low-ranking English-knowing Indian clerks was one of the main reasons that prompted the government to take steps to spread Western education.

Western education, however, influenced Indian society in a way that the British could never have imagined. Theories of philosophers like John Locke, Jeremy Bentham, Adam Smith and Voltaire instilled in the Indian minds notions of freedom, liberty, equality and democracy. As a result of the exposure to such ideas, Indians began to recognize the need for change.

The demand for social and religious reform that manifested itself in the early decades of the 19th century partly arose as a response to western education and culture. India's contact with the West made educated Indians realize that socio-religious reform was a prerequisite for the all-round development of the country.

Educated Indians like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar worked systematically to eradicate social evils. A period of social reforms began in India during the time of Governor General Lord William Bentinck.

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## 14.1 OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the impact of modern education on Indian society
- Explain the role of modern education in the emergence of new intelligentsia
- Discuss the emergence of local government during the British period

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## 14.2 DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

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In ancient India, the educational system embodied the method of oral teaching and learning texts by heart. This system prescribed the ancient learning through the transmission of knowledge from generation to generation, before it was stored up in the form of manuscripts. The gurukul system which necessitated the stay of the student away from his home at the house of a teacher or in a boarding house of established reputation was one of the most important features of the ancient Indian education. The Hindu *Shastras* recommended that the student should begin to live under the supervision of his teacher after his initiation ceremony. Direct, personal and continuous contact with a teacher of noble character naturally produced great effect on the scholar during the pliable period of childhood and adolescence. Texts of a spiritual bent were studied at these centres of learning. After invasion by the Mughals, Persians and the Turks, the culture and teaching of these denominations had a tremendous influence on the Indian form of learning. The Muslims established madrasas to disseminate theological learning among the Muslim children. There were two main schools of education in pre-colonial India:

- Vedic form of education
- Education in the madrasas
- Education in Colonial Setup

Since in the initial stage, the East India Company's position in India was precarious and unsettled, the Company took a pragmatic stand and there was a continuation of existing systems. The early policy of the East India Company was that of non-intervention in the Indian social matters. In the last two decades of the eighteenth century and the first decade of the nineteenth, Company officials pursued a policy of conciliation towards the native culture of its new dominion.

However, since the time the East India Company started ruling in Bengal, the officials took a lot of interest in the issue of educating Indians. Therefore, the three goals that the policy sought to pursue were as follows:

- Sponsoring Indians in their own culture

- Advancing knowledge of India
- Employing their knowledge in the government

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### **Orientalism**

One also discerns in the earlier British administrators a respect for traditional Indian culture that expressed itself in Warren Hastings's policy of orientalism. Orientalism was facilitated by a number of academics who were attracted to the Indian civilization. Scholars were drawn to the service of the Company due to the promotion of knowledge of Asia. As mentioned earlier, the Asiatic Society was founded in Calcutta by William Jones, a judge in the newly established

Supreme Court of Bengal. Soon, Jones advanced his famous thesis on the common origin of Indo-European languages. Some Company officials argued that the Company should try to win over its subjects by surpassing the region's previous rulers in support of indigenous learning. This resulted in the establishment of Benares Sanskrit College, which was founded in Varanasi in 1791 during the administration of Lord Cornwallis. Warren Hastings envisaged the Company as the successor of a great Empire, and saw the support of vernacular learning as the appropriate role befitting the empire. There was an attempt to learn about the Indian culture through a study of scriptures in Sanskrit and Persian languages, and to use that knowledge in the matters of governance.

In 1781, Hastings founded the Madrasa Aliya, an institution in Calcutta for the study of Arabic and Persian languages, and Islamic Law. Some Company officials endeavoured to become efficient administrators, and they realized that knowledge of Indian languages and cultures facilitated this endeavour. It led to the founding of the College of Fort William in Calcutta in 1800 by Lord Wellesley, the then Governor-General. The college later played an important role both in the development of modern Indian languages and in the Bengal Renaissance. Knowledge about the subject population, their social customs, manners and codes were regarded as an essential precondition for developing permanent institutions of rule in India. Many important Company officials, such as Thomas Munro and Montstuart Elphinstone, were influenced by orientalism. They supported the view that the Company's government in India should be responsive to Indian expectations. The orientalist philosophy prevailed in the education policy well into the 1820s, and was echoed in the founding of the Poona Sanskrit College in Pune in 1821 and the Calcutta Sanskrit College in 1824. Hastings' policy to govern the conquered in their own ways and resist Anglicization thus revealed both the ideological preferences of the early administrators and also their political practicality.

### **Evangelicalism**

Evangelicalism is a Protestant Christian movement of England of the 18th century. This movement in contrast to the Orthodox Church emphasized on

personal experiences, individual reading of gospel rather than the traditions of the established church. While some Christian missionaries attempted to reform the 'degenerate Indian society' quietly, the evangelists were openly hostile to 'Indian barbarism' and desired to 'civilize India'.

The influential members of the Evangelicalism were Wilberforce, the confidant of Pitt, Charles Grant, chairman of the directors and his son who was a cabinet minister. They advocated bringing Christian West to the East and "India will reform herself as a flower to the Sun". Charles Grant propagated the policy of assimilation of India into the great civilizing mission of Britain. This attitude coincides with the liberalism advocated by Macaulay.

The British East India Company too agreed upon this philosophy of civilizing India as by doing so they could have markets for their finished products in India. Charles Grant too supported this idea as civilizing process would lead to material prosperity. Thus, in the late 18th and the early 19th centuries the idea of 'improvement' became a part of the civilizing process. The then Governor General Cornwallis introduced permanent settlement in Bengal as a part of his vision of improvement as the magic touch of property would create capital and market in land.

When Wiliam Bentink became the Governor General of India by the Charter Act of 1833, liberal minded Macaulay suggested that Indians should be civilized through the Western education system. There arose a debate between the orientalist who insisted that the old system of education be continued and the Anglicists who supported the move of Macaulay. Finally, the Western education system was introduced with the cooperation of the reformer, Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

### **Utilitarianism**

From the middle of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, utilitarianism as a school of thought dominated English political thinking. Francis Hutcheson, Hume, Helvetius, Priestly, William Paley and Beccaria were some of the early propagators of utilitarianism. However, it was Bentham who systematically laid down the theory and made it popular on the basis of his innumerable proposals for reform. The great philosopher of the twentieth century Bertrand Russell rightly pointed out that Bentham's merit consisted not in the doctrine but in his vigorous application of it to various practical problems.

Bentham's close friend James Mill introduced him to the two of the greatest economists of the time, Malthus and David Ricardo from whom Bentham was able to learn various concepts of classical economics. These thinkers called themselves 'Philosophic Radicals'. Their aim was to transform England into a modern, liberal, democratic, constitutional, secular and market state. The term 'Utilitarianism' was used interchangeably with philosophic radicalism, individualism, laissez faire and administrative nihilism. The principal assumptions of utilitarianism were that human beings, as a rule,

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sought happiness, that pleasure alone was good, and that the only right action was that which produced the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The utilitarian thinkers reiterated the ideas of the Greek thinker, *Epicures*. Bentham provided a scientific approach to the pleasure–pain theory and applied to the policies of the state, welfare measures and the administrative, penal and legislative reforms. He provided a psychological perspective on human nature.

In his book, *Introduction to the Principles of Moral and Legislation*, Bentham elucidates his theory of utility. The keynote of his principle is that the state is useful only so long as it caters to the '*Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number*'. Bentham aspired to create a complete utilitarian code of law, which he named 'Pannomion'. He proposed several legal and social reforms. He set forth a fundamental moral tenet on which the code of law should be based. He stressed that the right act or policy was that which would cause 'the greatest good for the greatest number of people,' (i.e. the greatest happiness principle or the principle of utility). He proposed the Hedonistic or felicific calculus, which is a procedure for estimating the moral status of any action. His utilitarian philosophy was revised and expanded by his student John Stuart Mill. Mill converted 'Benthamism' into a principal element in the liberal conception of state policy objectives. Bentham classified 12 pains and 14 pleasures. He proposed a 'felicific Calculus' to test the 'happiness factor' of any action. Using these measurements, he puts forward his views on the concept of punishment and its utilization—whether it would generate more pleasure or more pain for a society. He calls for legislators to assess whether punishment becomes a reason for an even more evil offense. Bentham argues that the unnecessary laws and punishments might ultimately give rise to new and more dangerous offences.

Bentham advocated that, 'nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign master, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. On one hand, the standard of right and wrong, on the other, the chain of cause and effect, are fasten to heir thorn. The achievement of pleasure and avoidance of pain are not only the motivating forces of human behaviour; they also set the standards of values in life'. According to Bentham, what applies to an individual's morals, applies with equal force. For the state, he pointed out that the action of the state is good, which increases pleasure and decreases the pain of the largest number of the individuals comprising it. All action must be judged by this criterion. According to him, if the state promotes the greatest good of the greatest number it is good, otherwise it is bad. For Bentham, only the greatest happiness of the greatest number can be the measure of right and wrong. Hence, Bentham's utilitarianism is based on individualism as well as democracy.

The utilitarians also believed in the vision of civilizing and improving India like the evangelicalism. They were radicals and humanists and had a



strong faith in reason. The book, *History of India*, written by James Mill in 1817, was extensively read and referred to by the employees of East India Company. This book caused immense harm to the Indian society by laying the seeds of communalist approach to the study of Indian history and civilization. The utilitarian philosophy also influenced the views of Dalhousie in creating all-India departments with single heads. The utilitarians advocated moral worth of an education that was good for the society and promoted instruction in ‘useful knowledge’. Such useful instruction to Indians had the added advantage of making them more suitable for the Company’s growing bureaucracy.

According to Mill, the more the Asian people would be enlightened, the happier they would be. For Mill, European manners, arts, and institutions are far from perfect when assessed from the utilitarian perspective. From Mill’s perspective, only when the moral and the political ideals and practices of the utilitarian liberal doctrine were implemented in Europe and all over the world could the maximization of global happiness be foreseeable.

Given his concern for India, Mill’s immediate objective was to bring European enlightenment to India even before taking up the administrative job in the East India Company in 1819. As early as in 1813, Mill denounced in a review article the claim that Indians could not be enlightened; ‘Why everything is unchangeable so long as nothing occurs which is calculated to produce a change’. Mill thought that if the Indians had extensive interaction with the Europeans, they would inevitably receive substantial positive impact on their social progress from the Europeans. Mill believed that the extent of progress which the Indians might attain through interacting with the Europeans would be no less than what the Mughals had brought them: ‘an intercourse with Europeans is not likely to produce effects less considerable, than intercourse with a people so nearly on the same level of civilization with themselves, as the Mahomedans’. For Mill, before the Moghuls ruled India, the individual progress and the societal progress of the Hindu Indians had been retarded because of their superstitions in Hinduism.

Mill fervently believed that the enlightenment of India would bring the European civilization close to the ‘doors’ of other Asian people who needed as much enlightenment from the Europeans as India. According to Mill, it was desirable for people at higher level of progress to help those at a relatively lower level of progress.

Mill believed that it was to the benefit of the Indians in the independent states if they were governed by the British but objected to imposing British institutions over them by offensive war.

### **Anglicists and Orientalists**

English education was introduced in India in the eighteenth century through the charity schools run in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay for the education

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of the European and Anglo-Indian children. The Company supported these schools in various ways, but it did not take any direct responsibility for the education of the indigenous population until 1813. The missionaries worked for the dissemination of western education. They considered the native languages and indigenous knowledge as backward. The missionaries believed that western education would lead to proselytization. The Serampore missionaries, in particular, were very eager to spread western education; their settlement near Calcutta became the sanctuary of three Baptist missionaries—Dr William Carey, Ward and Joshua Marshman. They ran schools for both boys and girls and also started running a printing press and translating the Bible into local languages. The number of such missionary activities before 1813 was, however, very small.

Indians who were well-versed in the classical and vernacular languages were initially required by the East India Company for administrative needs. In the judicial department, Indians conversant with Sanskrit, Arabic or Persian were required to sit as assessors with English judges and expound Hindu or Muslim law from Sanskrit, Persian or Arabic books. The knowledge of Persian and vernaculars was also valued in the political department for correspondence with the rulers of Indian states. These lower rungs of clerical staffs in the revenue and commercial departments were also important, as they had direct contacts with the uneducated masses due to their knowledge of vernaculars. However, there was a gradual shift in the Company's policies and for higher grade of staff in the Company's services, the knowledge of English as well as that of vernaculars was later considered as indispensable. The Court of Directors made a modest beginning towards the development of education in India in 1813 when the Charter Act (1813) provided for an annual expenditure of ₹1,00,000 'for the revival and promotion of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories'. But this decision did not immediately decide the nature of education to be provided for the Indians. In official thinking in India, the orientalist thoughts were still powerful, having received strong support in a then recent Minute of Lord Minto, the Governor General between 1806 and 1813. The new General Committee of Public Instruction was dominated by the orientalist, who interpreted the clause to mean the advancement of Indian classical literature and sciences of the land. The programme they initiated was for the establishment of a Sanskrit College in Calcutta, and two more Oriental Colleges at Agra and Delhi.

The main factor which tilted the scale in favour of the English language and western literature was the Company's education policy finding support from the newly emerged Indian intelligentsia. These intellectuals were a product of western education, who believed that the modernization of India would be enabled through English education. Also, these Indians wanted a

system of education which could help them to earn their livelihood. Raja Ram Mohan Roy protested against the government's proposal to strengthen the Calcutta, the Madras and the Benares Sanskrit College. He wrote to Lord Amherst in 1823 that Sanskrit education could 'only be expected to load the minds of youth with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions of life which are of little or no practical use to their possessors or to society. The students will therefore acquire what was known two thousand years ago, with the addition of vain and empty subtleties since then produced by speculative men.' Advocating the importance of modern scientific learning, he wrote, 'The Sanskrit system of education would be best calculated to keep the country in darkness, if such had been the policy of British Government. But as the improvement of the native population is the object of the Government, it will consequently promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy with other useful sciences.' As a result of this, the government agreed to promote the study of English as well as oriental languages.

A grant was sanctioned for the Calcutta Hindu College that was set up in 1817 by the Bengali intelligentsia, which imparted instruction mainly in English language and emphasized the study of Western humanities and sciences. The government also set up three Sanskrit colleges one each at Calcutta, Delhi and Agra. In addition, funds were set apart for the translation of European scientific works into oriental languages.

There were two opposing groups who argued on the education policy in India. The orientalist led by H.T. Prinsep advocated the policy of providing encouragement to oriental literature, whereas the Anglicists favoured the adoption of English as a medium of instruction. Bentinck, a utilitarian reformist, took over as the Governor General in 1828 and British historian and politician, Thomas Babington Macaulay was appointed the law member in his council in 1834. The latter was immediately appointed as the President of the General Committee of Public Instruction. On 2 February 1835, he issued his famous 'Minute on Indian Education'. Macaulay favoured the viewpoint of the Anglicists, which also included the utilitarians, led by James Mill, who had begun to play a significant role in shaping the Company's policies.

Full of contempt for oriental learning, Macaulay's Minute asserted that 'a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia'. He advocated for the Indians an education in European literature and sciences, inculcated through the medium of English language. Such an education, he argued, would create 'a class of persons between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and intellect'. Bentinck immediately endorsed Macaulay's proposals in an executive order of 7 March 1835. Regarding the importance of English language, Macaulay wrote: 'Whoever knows that language has ready access to all the vast intellectual

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wealth which all the wisest nations of the earth have created and handed in the course of ninety generations... In India, English is the language spoken by the ruling class. It is spoken by the higher class of natives at the seats of Government. It is likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the East.' Macaulay cited the examples of European Renaissance and the case of Russia. He dilated upon 'the great impulse given to the mind of a whole society—of prejudice overthrown, of knowledge diffused, of task purified, of arts and sciences planted in countries which had recently been ignorant and barbarous'. In other words, he sought the production of 'brown Englishmen' to fill the lower cadres in the Company's administration.

The Government of Lord William Bentinck in the Resolution of 7 March 1835 accepted the viewpoint of Macaulay that, in future, the object of the Company's government should be the promotion of European literature and sciences; through the medium of English language and in future all funds were to be spent for that purpose. Bentinck supported the replacement of Persian by English as the official language, the use of English as the medium of instruction, and the training of English-speaking Indians as teachers. He was inspired by utilitarian ideas and called for 'useful learning'. Under Macaulay, thousands of elementary and secondary schools were opened though they usually had an all male student body. The universities in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras were established in 1857, just before the Rebellion. By 1890, some 60,000 Indians had matriculated, chiefly in the liberal arts or law. About a third entered public administration, and another one-third became lawyers. The result was a very well educated professional state bureaucracy. By the early 1830s, the Anglicists had the control in devising education policy in India. Many utilitarian ideas were employed in Thomas Babbington Macaulay's 'Minute on Indian Education' of 1835. The Minute was to influence education policy in India well into the next century. However, later it provoked great controversy.

### **Growth of Press**

The growth of journalism in 19th century India was influenced by many social currents. Modern English education brought with it new ideas from the West. It resulted in the emergence of a new section of educated middle class in the society and the press developed as a representative of these educated sections. The press was run and owned by the educated class and was majorly influenced by the socio-religious reform movements as the educated class was also involved in reform activities. Moreover, the intense missionary propaganda and its criticism of indigenous religious practices motivated the Indians to counteract the criticism through the columns in various papers. Above all, the healthy growth of Bengali vernacular journalism had its influence over other parts of the country.

All these influences had a direct bearing on the growth of the press. The early journals established by the educated sections of the Indian society

in the three Presidencies of British India reflect this. These early efforts in the field of journalism reflected two significant trends broadly.

- First, in the light of new Western knowledge and liberal values the early journals initiated a discussion on Hindu society, its religious practices, age old traditions and the evils inherent in them. Some journals also suggested the reform of the old traditional values. These new ideas invited protest from the orthodox section of the society and they began to counter the reform efforts initiated by the emerging middle classes who were influenced by the liberal values of the west. However, the vigorous reform campaign attracted more attention from the press.
- Secondly, the uncontrolled missionary activities and their criticism of Hindu traditions deeply hurt the feelings of the common people. This religious controversy and theological tussle between the two groups found an expression in the columns of the press.

These two broad strands influenced the growth of press in Madras Presidency also. The beginning of English press owned by Indians was witnessed as early as 1844. The initiation of the Indian-owned English press was due to unhindered missionary criticism of the Hindu religious practices in the journals published by Christian missionaries. The journals tried to build up public opinion against the colonial rule and generate an anti-British feeling by criticizing missionary activities.

The vernacular press made its beginnings around the same time. When compared to the Bengali, Marathi and Gujarati press, the development of Telugu press was rather slow. Ram Mohan Roy published two papers, *Sambad-Kaumudi* in Bengali and *Miratul Akbar* in Persian, which was propagating the case for social reform. Dada Bhai Naoroji edited *Rast Goftar* and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar started *Shome Prakash* in 1890. In 1851 Gujarati fortnightly *Rust Goftar* was started by Dadabhai Naoroji. English weekly, the *Indian Social Reformer*, was started in Bombay to propagate social reforms. The Times of India started in 1861; The Pioneer in 1865; The Madras Mail in 1865, The Statesman in 1875. These papers usually supported the policies of the British government.

The other papers were the *Amrit Bazar Patrika* started in Bengal in 1868 and the Hindu started in Madras in 1878. By the end of the 19th Century, about 500 newspapers and journals in Indian languages and English were started in different parts of the country.

### **Growth of English Newspaper**

The advent of the first newspaper in India occurred in the capital city of West Bengal, Calcutta. James Augustus Hickey is considered the ‘father of Indian press’ as he started the first Indian English newspaper from Kolkata, the *Bengal Gazette* or *Calcutta General Advertise* in January, 1780.

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This first printed newspaper was a weekly publication. In 1789, the first newspaper from Bombay (now Mumbai), the *Bombay Herald* appeared, followed by the *Bombay Courier* in 1791. Later, in the year 1792, *Bombay Gazette* merged with *Bombay Herald*. These newspapers carried news of the areas under the British rule.

The three earliest English journals in the Presidency viz., *The Native Circulator* (1844), *Crescent* (1844) and *The Rising Sun* (1857) were owned by Telugus in the Presidential capital of Madras.

To fight the missionaries, Lakshminarasu bought the *Native Circulator*, a newspaper founded by one Narayanaswamy Naidu and renamed it *The Crescent*. This paper took on *The Record*, which was the missionary media vehicle. The first editor of *The Crescent* was Mr. Harley, an ex-army man. The first copy of the journal was brought out on 2 October 1844. The paper faced difficulties from its inception as the Government denied it privileges granted to other newspapers. *The Crescent* was published from Lakshminarasu's Hindu Press on Armenian Street. Initially, it was a bi-weekly-published on Wednesdays and Saturdays, in addition to a special half-sheet edition every Monday evening. Leading people of the time such as Madhava Rao, Sadasiva Pillai, Seshayya Sastri and Rama Iyengar were regular contributors.

In 1785 *Madras Courier Weekly* was started. In 1840 *Hindu Patriot* was started by Harishchandra Mukherjee. In 1862 *Indian Mirror* was started. Initially the editor was Devendranath Tagore followed by Keshavchandra Sen and Narendranath Sen. On 28 September 1861, *Bombay Times*, *Bombay Standard*, *Bombay Courier* and *The Telegraph* merged together to form *The Times of India*. Its editor was Robert Knight. Initially it was monthly but later changed to weekly. In 1875 *Statesman* was started by Robert Knight. In 1890 *Statesman* and *Friend of India* merged to become *Statesman*. In 1865 *Pioneer* was started from Allahabad. On 20 September 1878, *Hindu* was started from Madras by G. Subramaniam Aiyar as a weekly but later it was made triweekly in 1883 when Kusturiangar became its editor. In 1889 it was made a daily. Some of the English newspapers were as follows:

### 1. Times of India

*The Times of India* was called *The Bombay Times and Journal of Commerce*, and was published every Saturday and Wednesday. J.E. Brennan was the editor and the owners included a British syndicate of 11 firms. It was launched as a semi-weekly edition by R.N.D. Velkar, a reformist leader. It became a daily in 1850, and was renamed *The Times of India* after a merger with other papers.

The merger was carried out by Robert Knight, 'one of the most inspiring figures in Indian journalism during the 19th century', according to Dileep Padgaonkar, renowned journalist and an editor of the *Times of India* during 1988-94 said—'Through his (Knight's) sharply-worded editorials, Knight

campaigns for a sound system of popular rights in India and sought massive investments to extend the rail network, improve Bombay's water supply, construct roads and set up irrigation facilities,' Padgaonkar (*Outlook* magazine in November 2012). 'He continued to upbraid British officials for the perks they enjoyed, for their nastiness towards Indians and for doing precious little to eradicate India's abysmal poverty. Moreover, unlike the rest of the Anglo-Indian press, he sympathized with the Great Uprising of 1857 even while he deplored the large-scale destruction of lives and property.'

In the 19th century, the TOI had around 800 employees and was circulated in India and Europe. In 1892, its editor, T.J. Bennett, entered into a partnership with F.M. Coleman, resulting in the formation of the joint stock company, Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. (BCCL).

## 2. The Statesman

The Statesman is a direct descendant of two newspapers, *The Englishman* and *The Friend of India*, both published in Calcutta (now Kolkata). *The Englishman* was started in 1811 by Robert Knight, who was previously the principal founder and editor of The Times of India. Knight founded *The Statesman* and *New Friend of India* on 15 January 1875, which later adopted the current name.

## 3. National Herald

The National Herald was established in Lucknow on 9 September 1938 by Jawaharlal Nehru. The paper carried on its masthead the words 'Freedom is in Peril, Defend it with All Your Might' taken from a cartoon by Gabriel from Brentford. Jawaharlal Nehru was an early editor of the newspaper and until his appointment as Prime Minister was the Chairman of the Herald's Board of Directors. In 1938, K. Rama Rao was appointed the paper's first editor. Following the Quit India Resolution of August 1942, the British Raj clamped down on the Indian press and the paper was shut between 1942 and 1945.

## 4. Pioneer

The Pioneer was founded in Allahabad in 1865 by George Allen, an Englishman. It was brought out three times a week from 1865 to 1869 and daily thereafter. In 1866, a supplement, the *Pioneer Mail*, consisting of '48 quarto-size pages,' mostly of advertisements, was added to the publication. In 1872, Alfred Sinnett became the editor of the newspaper. He oversaw the transformation of the newspaper to one of exercising great influence in British India. In 1874, the weekly *Pioneer Mail* became the *Pioneer Mail and India Weekly News* and began to feature short stories and travel writings. Author Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), in his early 20s, worked at the newspaper office in Allahabad as an assistant editor from November 1887 to March 1889. In July 1933, *The Pioneer* was sold to a syndicate and moved from

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Allahabad to Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, at which time the *Pioneer Mail and India Weekly News* ceased publication.

## 5. Hindu

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Hindu, a monthly, was started by six people in 1878. In 1883 Hindu was published as Tri-weekly (Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening). The Hindu supported the government activities and gave wide coverage to INC sessions. From 1889, Hindu started getting published daily.

### Consequences of Growth of Press

The press and literature played a very important role in moulding and shaping the national consciousness of the Indians. Newspapers in those days were started with the objective of public service by patriots. The newspapers were published with the sole objective of arousing political consciousness, to inculcate nationalism, to expose colonial rule and to preach disloyalty to the masses by opposing the unjust and harmful policies of the government.

In particular, the role of the newspapers like *The Indian Mirror*, *The Bombay Samachar*, and *The Hindu Patriot*, *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *The Hindu*, *The Kesari*, *The Bengalee*, *The Huriara*, *The Bengali Public Opinion*, *The Reis and Rayet*, *The Samprokash*, *The Sulabh Samachar*, *The Hitavadi*, *The Induprakash*, *The Swadeshimitran*, *The Advocate of Lucknow*, *The Herald of Bihar* are really noteworthy. By 1875, there was phenomenal growth of newspapers in India which rose to 475 in number. These newspapers created awareness among the masses of India about the need to be united and to act with one voice to achieve their goal of freedom from foreign yoke.

Bipan Chandra observes that in the period from 1870 to 1918, powerful newspapers emerged under distinguished and fearless nationalists. The influence of the press extended far beyond its literate subscribers. Their influence was not limited to cities and large towns only. All these changes were an expression of the national awakening of India and contributed to its further development. The Indian press helped shape and form public opinion regarding colonial rule. It was also helpful in the organization of political protests and promotion of nationalist struggle. Newspapers published in English as well as vernaculars aimed at exposing the deceitfulness of the British administrators, while at the same time making the ideas of liberty, equality and democracy widely popular among the masses. It gave a new colour to the idea of achieving independence. This resulted in an unprecedented growth of the press in India, and by 1875, approximately 478 newspapers were published in the nation. There was not a single province in India which did not produce a journal or newspaper to uphold the cause of the freedom struggle.

National literature such as poems, novels, songs and pamphlets engendered nationalist sentiments. Some of the prominent nationalist writers

of the period were: Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore in Bengali; Lakshminath Bezbarua in Assamese; Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar in Marathi; Subramanya Bharathi in Tamil; Bharatendu Harish Chandra and Prem Chand in Hindi and Altaf Husain Hali, Mohammed Shibli Noman and Mohammed Iqbal in Urdu. All of them stressed upon the humanistic character, equality and freedom of all individuals.

The newspapers and journals gave opportunities to share ideas and problems. Similarly, novel, drama, short story, poetry, song, dance, theatre, art and cinema were used to spread views and express resistance to colonial rule. They spoke the language of the people, showcasing their everyday lives, joys and sorrows. Along with newspapers and journals, they promoted the feelings of self-confidence, self-respect, awareness and patriotism, thereby developing a feeling of national consciousness. Of these writers, the most important are Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra, M.G. Ranade, and many more by their literary works fostered the spirit of patriotism and national consciousness among the masses.

The Indian Press played a notable role in mobilizing public opinion, organizing political movements, fighting out public opinions and promoting nationalism. In 1916, Home Rule League established by Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, used print media as a propaganda vehicle. She started 'Madras Standard' and renamed it as 'New India'. New India came with full page editorial with news on the nation and freedom struggle.

Due to the First World War there was a setback in the newspaper industry, hence printing cost increased which increased the cost of the newspaper and as a result there was decrease in subscribers.

In 1915, after Gandhi returned from South Africa he started a chain of newspaper called 'Young India' and 'Naveglean' in Gujarati. As his writing style was simple and clear, it helped him to spread the notion of unity and liberty among the Indians. Gandhi's disciples started the same newspapers in other languages in India to help spread the awareness that Gandhi was trying to convey on such as poverty, women rights, ending untouchability and so on.

In 1919 the British government introduced Rowlatt Act which Annie Besant fought through her writing in the newspaper. In 1920, Annie started National University and introduced journalism as a diploma course and then gave students internship in New India. Thus she is known as 'Torch Bearer of Indian Liberty' and 'Pioneer of Journalism'.

In 1930, Dandi Salt March was given wide publicity by the newspapers. In 1938, the National Herald newspaper was started by Indian National Congress (INC) which fully supported the INC activities. In 1941, 'Dina Thandi' a Tamil newspaper daily, was founded by Aditanar, with its first edition from Madurai.

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The Indian Press grew and played an important role in rousing the national consciousness of the people. The bi-weekly *Kesari* and *Maratha* were started by Bal Gangadhar Tilak. The British Government passed many Acts to impose censorship over the growing Indian Press from time to time. In spite of the suppression, the Press played the role of awakening the people to the need for reform and became one of the instruments in the growth of nationalism. Some of the acts passed by the British government to curb the press were as follows:

- **Censor Act 1799 by Lord Wellesley:** Every newspaper should print the names of printer, editor and proprietor. Before printing any material it should be submitted to the secretary of Censorship. This Act was abolished by Hastings.
- **Licensing Regulation Act 1823 by John Adam:** Every publisher should get a license from the government, defaulters would be fined ₹400 and the press would be ceased by the government. Government has right to cancel the license. Charles Metcalf abolished the Act.
- **Vernacular Press Act IX 1878:** Vernacular press criticized British rule. Therefore British Government came down heavily on vernacular press. Magistrates were authorized to ask any publisher of newspaper to give assurance of not publishing anything threatening peace and security. The magistrate's decision was final in any dispute. This law was not applicable to English Press. It was repealed by Lord Ripon in 1882.
- **Newspaper Act 1908:** Magistrate had the power to confiscate the assets of the press. Against this confiscation one could appeal to High Court within 15 days. Under this Act as many as 7 presses were forfeited.
- **Press Regulating Act 1942:** Registration of journalists was made mandatory. Limitations were imposed on the messages regarding civil disturbances. Prohibition of news was imposed regarding acts of sabotage. Limitations on headlines and space given to news on disturbances. Limitations on headlines and space given to news on disturbances. Government had the authority on arbitrary censorship.

### **Emergence of the New Intelligentsia and its Composition**

The 19th century witnessed a cultural–ideological struggle against the backward elements of traditional culture, on the one hand, and the fast hegemonizing colonial culture and ideology on the other. Many term this phase as the Renaissance Age of India, just like what Europe had experienced. It was a phase which saw changes and transformation in many areas of India's social and cultural fabric. In many ways the British colonization of India had a lot to do with this. Even though the presence of the British caused some destruction of wealth and culture of the country, yet it was also responsible for growth in many other myriad areas, the most evident changes being in

the field of education, language and social structures. The introduction of English language had a lot to do with this revival and growth.

The main influences that led to this period of Renaissance were:

- Influence of Christian missionaries
- English language
- Western thoughts and ways of living

The influence of western thoughts and philosophies had a huge role to play in awakening the already dormant potential of India's creativity as a nation and people. India with its rich heritage of spirituality and culture had decayed a bit due to other foreign invasion over hundreds of years. The Renaissance period saw a revival of the oppressed Indian spirit and soul, if one were to put it that way. Each individual has a creative spirit which due to various social conditioning becomes dormant or repressed, the same when taken collectively as a nation or culture can wake up when a severe blow is received from the outside. In case of India this is exactly what happened. The British rule became both a bane and a boon in being a catalyst to a great revival of India's creative talents. The reasons that led to the Indian Renaissance of nineteenth century were as follows:

- There was an influx of ideas from the western world in the political, economic, social and cultural fields due to British rule.
- Indian and European scholars and intellectuals like Max Muller, Sir William Jones, Raja Rammohan Roy, Bhagwan Lal Indraji, R.G. Bhandarkar and M.G. Ranade fuelled the potential of India's cultural and spiritual growth.
- Great modern literature from scholars and writers such as Bankim Chandra, Keshav Chandra Sen, Madhusudan Dutt led to new ways of looking at India's tradition and history as a nation with great creativity and spirit. This led to a huge awakening of the human consciousness in India.

The zealous Christian missionaries in their mission to spread Christianity helped translate a lot of European literature and religious writings into regional languages like Bengali, Marathi, Tamil and Telugu. This made people of India, especially those belonging to the weaker sections of the society, aware of their plight. The missionaries were hugely responsible for spreading the message of equality of all human kind irrespective of caste and class. They also attacked the other social evils that plagued the Indian society.

### **Emergence of the Reformists, Revivalists, Nationalists and Educated Middle Class**

The Indian society saw a sea change during the 19th century due to the impact of English education and ideology. The new intelligentsia were in the form of reformers, revivalists, nationalists and the educated middle class.

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### 1. Emergence of the Reformists

Reformists are people who advocate gradual reform rather than abolition or revolution. They support or advance gradual reform. In India, the British conquest and the consequent dissemination of colonial culture and ideology had led to an inevitable introspection about the strengths and weaknesses of indigenous culture and institutions of India. The response, indeed, was varied but the need to reform social and religious life was a commonly shared conviction. The social base of this quest which has generally, but not altogether appropriately been called the renaissance, was the newly emerging middle class and the traditional as well as western educated intellectuals.

The British brought to India new ideas such as liberty, equality, freedom and human rights from the Renaissance, the Reformation Movement and the various revolutions that took place in Europe. These ideas appealed to some sections of our society and led to several reform movements in different parts of the country. At the forefront of these movements were reformists such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Aruna Asaf Ali and Pandita Ramabai.

The impact of the efforts made by these numerous individuals, reform societies, and religious organizations was felt all over and was most evident in the national movement. Women started getting better education opportunities and took up professions and public employment outside their homes. The role of women like Captain Laxmi Sehgal of Indian National Army (INA), Sarojini Naidu, Annie Besant, Aruna Asaf Ali and many others were extremely important in the freedom struggle.

English language and western ideas also had some positive impact on the society. Reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, and Swami Vivekananda absorbed western ideas of liberalism and democracy and used it to reform some of the non-humanitarian social and religious practices of the time. Social and economic equality took root through political parties, discussions and debates on public platform and the press.

The spirit of reform embraced almost the whole of India which began with the efforts of Raja Ram Mohan Roy in Bengal which led to the formation of the Brahmo Samaj in 1828. Apart from the Brahmo Samaj, the Paramahansa Mandali and the Prarthana Samaj in Maharashtra and the Arya Samaj in Punjab and North India were some of the prominent movements among the Hindus. Some regional and caste movements like the Kayasth Sabha in Uttar Pradesh and the Sarin Sabha in Punjab also existed. The backward castes also started the work of reformation with the Satya Sodhak Samaj in Maharashtra and the Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Sabha in Kerala. The Ahmadiya and Aligarh movements, the Singh Sabha and the Rehnumai Mazdeyasana Sabha represented the spirit of reform among the Muslims, the Sikhs and the Parsi respectively.

Although religious reformation was the major criteria for these movements, none of them were exclusively religious in character. Strongly inspired by humanism, the idea of otherworldliness and salvation were not a part of the agenda of the reformists; instead their attention was focused on worldly existence. Akshay Kumar Dutt and Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar refused to be drawn into any discussion on supernatural questions. When asked about the existence of God, Vidyasagar had responded by saying that he had no time to think about God as there was much to be done on earth. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Vivekananda emphasized the secular use of religion.

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### **2. Emergence of Revivalists**

Revivalist is a person who promotes or holds religious revivals. In other words, revivalists are those who revive former customs, methods, etc. During the colonial administration, India faced the challenge of the intrusion of colonial culture and ideology. Therefore, there was an attempt to reinvigorate traditional institutions developed during the nineteenth century. The initial struggle against colonial domination was in the realm of culture. Intrusions into the cultural aspect of the society was felt intensely. Therefore, a defence of indigenous culture developed almost simultaneously with the colonial conquest. Those who championed this idea were known as revivalists.

This concern embraced the entire cultural existence, the way of life and all signifying practices like language, religion, art and philosophy. The two main features that highlighted this concern were—the creation of an alternate cultural-ideological system and the regeneration of traditional institutions. Some of the concerns were in the realm of vernacular languages, creation of an alternate education system, regeneration of Indian art and literature, emphasis on Indian ethnic dressing, food, religion and revitalizations of the Indian system of medicine.

### **3. Nationalists of the Colonial Period**

Nationalism is a belief, creed or political ideology that involves an individual identifying with, or becoming attached to, one's nation. It involves national identity. A nationalist is one who tries to obtain political independence for his or her country.

By 1900, the Congress had emerged as an all-India political organization in India. It failed to attract Muslims, who felt that their representation in government service was inadequate. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan launched a movement for Muslim regeneration that culminated in the founding of the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh in 1875 (renamed Aligarh Muslim University in 1920), with the objective to educate wealthy students by emphasizing the compatibility of Islam with modern western knowledge.



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The nationalistic sentiments among Congress members led to the movement to be represented in the bodies of government so as to have a say in the administration of India. Congressmen considered themselves loyalists but wanted an active role in governing their own country on behalf of the British empire. This trend was personified by Dadabhai Naoroji, who went as far as contesting, successfully, an election to the British House of Commons, becoming its first Indian member.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was the first Indian nationalist to embrace *Swaraj* as the destiny of the nation.. Tilak deeply opposed the then British education system that ignored and defamed India's culture, history and values. He fought against the British for the lack of any voice or role for ordinary Indians in the affairs of their nation. For these reasons, he considered *Swaraj* as the natural and only solution. His popular sentence 'Swaraj is my birthright, and I shall have it' became the source of inspiration for Indians.

### 4. Emergence of the Educated Middle Class

The educated middle-class has been a source of imagining and articulating India as a modern and democratic nation and hence they have been a part of the historical and sociological category in modern India. This took place in the later years of the colonial rule of the British over the Indian subcontinent. After the end of the British rule in India, the Indian nationalist movement and the middle-class leadership of this movement helped in the provision of foundational values to the newly independent country.

The junction of colonialism, the democratic state and the capitalist economic development helped in the germination of the seeds of the educated middle class in India. The very first instance of the development of the middle class can be located in the colonial period. The momentum for this came from the rule of the British colony in India. The British rule brought with it a lot of changes like the introduction of modern industrial economy, secular education and many other administrative changes, over a time period of two centuries. Schools and colleges were initiated in different parts of the country especially in the colonial cities of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay.

A new class emerged in India over the years. There were those who were employed in the administrative department of the British government and apart from these were other professionals like doctors, teachers, lawyers and journalists. These professionals usually came from privileged upper-caste backgrounds and from families who were financially strong but not rich enough to not have a means of earning. This is the one of the factors that set them apart from the richest strata of the society such as the large hereditary landlords or the heirs of an indigenous aristocratic family. Similarly, it also put them right above the vast majority of the poor people of India.



Ideas of liberalism and democracy had a huge impact on the nascent educated middle class who had acquired these ideas through modern education in India and also abroad. The French Revolution brought with it the ideas of liberalism and democracy and hence they became popular in the West after the Revolution. The educated middle classes initiated 'social reform movement' in their particular communities and urged Indians to fight for their freedom from the colonial rule. However, even when these middle classes were 'modern', they participated in movements related to identity and helped in the strengthening of boundaries between and across religions and communities.

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### **Nature and Limitations of the Nineteenth Century Renaissance**

During this period, reform movements were largely swayed by two important intellectual principles—rationalism and religious universalism. A rational secular outlook was replacing blind faith that had crept into tradition and custom. Universalism was not purely philosophy. It affected political and social outlook till religious particularism took root in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The main objectives of this movement were liberal ideas, national unity, and progress. These could be achieved by removing the backward elements in traditional culture as well as the repressive elements in colonial culture and ideology. Jettisoning casteism and idolatry had to be done alongside an emphasis on reviving the vernacular languages. The plan included restoring the indigenous education system by restoring the ancient arts and medicine and reconstructing traditional Indian knowledge. The socio-religious movements were an essential part of the growing nationalist consciousness. At this point it was important to make Indians feel proud of being Indian i.e. proud of their culture and heritage.

This movement succeeded in doing that. The colonial cultural hegemonization process was stopped in its tracks. The early reform movements talked about transformations that were required in both social and religious arenas. The reason for this is not hard to find. As is well known; social customs and traditions of India are closely linked to religious injunctions. Indian reformers recognized this close connection between the social and religious spheres of thought and activity. These early social reform movements mainly aimed at general social welfare, and not at improving the conditions of a particular community or caste.

The eighteenth and nineteenth century reform movements show major trends. Some reformers such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar were of the view that reforms should be initiated from within the society. Others wanted these changes to be backed by legislative intervention.

This meant that only state-supported reform movements could be effective. This notion was supported by such reformers as Keshub Chandra Sen and M.G. Ranade. The Young Bengal Movement represented reform

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initiated through symbols of transformation. It represented a radical trend in reform activity, and did not rely on the cultural traditions of India for reform. Reformers such as Dayanand Saraswati and Swami Vivekananda amongst others chose reform through social work.

### Women as the Focus of Social Reform

The status of Indian women in the pre-British Period was rooted in the social, religious, economic and political structure of that period. Regrettably, even Hindu religious literature such as the *Puranas*, *Smritis*, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharat* was in many ways responsible for propagating prejudices against women. Social evils against women were rampant in society. The horrific practices of sati, child marriage, polygamy, female infanticide, deprivation of education and other basic human rights, denying a widow the right to remarry as well as of the right to inherit property, were only some of the common evils prevalent in almost every part of India.

While it is true that British rule ruined Indian economy, it is also true that British officials did make the effort to lift women out of their substandard living conditions in this country. The British introduced in India a capitalist economy and a legal and political regime which was based on the principles of equality and freedom of the individual. Based on this, there were no inequalities based on birth, sex, caste or community. For the Indian women it was Western education, Western liberal thought, social reform movement, modern institutions, and modern means of transportation and communication that collectively played a positive role in their emancipation.

Significantly, the first protagonists for women's emancipation movement were not women but men (the liberal men). Women entered the movement for their own emancipation much later in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when they were themselves thinking about their status, and were speaking up and coming forward to espouse their cause. In fact during this period i.e. nineteenth and the twentieth century, social reformers were taking up the issue of women emancipation. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was one of the earliest Indians to have started a movement against the horrific practice of Sati. It was his persistence that paid off and the Anti-Sati Resolution was passed in 1829.

Another social evil that dogged Hindu society was that of child marriage and Indian women suffered in silence for centuries. Two prominent reformers, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and B.M. Malabari, a Parsi rigorously opposed early marriage. It was the diligent efforts of Vidyasagar that paved the way for passing of the Act of 1860. With this Act, the age of consent for married and unmarried girls was raised to ten years. B.M. Malabari took it upon himself to raise awareness of this evil through his journal *Indian Spectator*. He further explained how child marriage was leading to the ruin of the Hindu race. It was largely with his unrelenting efforts that the Age of Consent Act

was passed in 1891. With this Act the age of consummation of marriage was raised from ten to twelve years.

In 1929, the Child Marriage Restraint Act (popularly known as the Sarda Act) was passed, with which the marriageable age for girls became fourteen years and eighteen years for boys. Naturally, these developments came as a breath of fresh air for women by improving their social condition. It also made them aware that everything in life can be achieved if only one fights for it.

Widows lived a pitiable life. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in Bengal and Malabari, Narmad, Justice Ranade and K. Natrajan in Bombay spoke strongly for their cause and insisted that they be allowed to remarry and live a respectable life. Their efforts did not go to naught and in 1856 Lord Dalhousie passed The Widow Remarriage Act. Going against what the Shastras and ancient Hindu literature professed Hindu widows could now remarry. Another social ill that ailed our society was that of temple prostitution (*devdasi*). Even as it was followed in different parts of India, this social evil was especially rampant in South India, where a certain kind of opulence was associated with the temples. *Devdasis* became a hereditary caste for these women who gave themselves up in early childhood to temple service. They danced and sang in the temples but were also forced into prostitution in these sacred places. Muthulakshmi Reddi, a social reformer, pioneered a movement against this shocking practice. In 1925 the government passed a law that prohibited the trafficking of minors.

It seemed like there was no end to the cruelties that could be afflicted against women. Another such issue was that of polygamy or ‘multiple marriages’. Clearly, it was not a matter that was restricted to a certain community. Sadly, it had crept into almost all communities and few could escape it. Social activists strongly opposed it and wanted a stringent law that would protect women. Some such activists were Keshub Chandra Sen and Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan. The Native Marriage Act was passed in 1872, which forbade polygamy (and also polyandry—union of one woman with many males) for Hindus. It gave a boost to the idea of widow remarriage and allowed inter caste marriage for those who did not belong to any recognized school or religious faith.

The significance and far reaching effects of education cannot be underestimated. Indian social reformers of the time recognized this and emphasized education rights for women. They believed that education would make women both self-confident and knowledgeable. Pioneering work in this direction was done by some social organizations such as Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, Rama Krishna Mission, the Aligarh movement, and by the Christian missionaries of Holland (the Netherlands), America, Germany and England. It was in May 1849 that Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar with the help of Bethune established and brought into being the first school for girls, ‘Hindu

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Balika Vidyalaya'. Even though it was meant only for girls who belonged to high caste families it went a long way in removing prejudices against female education. Vidyasagar succeeded in ensuring that people recognized the importance of educating women. However there were many obstacles in the way of providing education to women. One of them was the curse of abysmal poverty which afflicted legions of Indian population. In spite of this, there was a growth in women's education and this can be seen from certain statistical figures: number of girls attending schools rose from 1,230,000 in 1917 to 2,890,000 in 1937. Even though the Wood's Despatch of 1854 and the Hunter Commission of 1882 sought to push women's education, it must be emphasized that it was the efforts of the social reformers and the Christian missionaries that were more effective. They were successful in opening and running schools for girls. It is significant that social reformer and educationist Professor Karve started the first Indian Women University in Pune in 1916.

The nationalist movement gave a different path to the process of social reform for women, especially when women started to take part in it. The Gandhian movement was one such organization where women participated. Thousands of them thronged the political mass movement and did not hesitate to picket liquor shops, march in demonstrations, court jails, and face lathi charges and even bullets. Later, many women worked as ministers, as under-secretaries and Deputy Speakers of provincial legislatures in Congress governments which were formed in 1937. Indian women also became members of local boards and municipalities. Women in India had come a long way. A new awakening had taken place. They were ready to find their place in the world and script their own destiny.

### Check Your Progress

1. What was the educational system of ancient India?
2. Name the two main schools of education in precolonial India.
3. Which year was the first English printing press owned by an Indian established in India?
4. What were the main reasons for the period of change in India in the 19th century?
5. What was the Native Marriage Act and when was it passed?

## 14.3 GROWTH OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

As the British moved towards a federal form of government, the constitutional reforms reflected the change quite distinctly. This was followed by creation of new departments, reorganizing the same and setting procedures for smooth conduct of the department. Initially, administration was grouped under two broad categories. One covering general administration, foreign services and finance

whereas, the revenue and judicial departments were grouped under the second category. Later, in 1843 four major departments within the administration came into existence, such as Military, Foreign, Home and Finance. The department of Home dealt with the legislative matters as well. In 1855, a separate department known as Public Works was established that aimed at developing the railways and the irrigation system of the country. With the passage of time, three main departments were established. In 1869, the Legislative Department took over the Home Department. Agriculture, Revenue and Commerce comprised the second department, which was created in 1871. In 1905, the third department of Industries was established. That very year, the Railway Board also came into existence. The department of Military services was later divided into two units, the Army Department and the Military Service Department. The government established a department of Education in 1911 and gradually the departmental responsibility grew. Each member of the Council was assigned a particular department and classification of papers as urgent, routine and unimportant was introduced. Only urgent papers would directly go to the Governor General. Lord Dalhousie introduced these measures. A portfolio system along with a system of noting was proposed in 1862. A system of flat file was adopted in 1882, which was improved upon by Lord Curzon in order to minimize official pedantry. Emphasis was laid on encouraging personal communication.

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### **Civil Service**

Prior to the Charter Act of 1833, the selection and appointments of Indian civil servants was conducted by the court of Directors of the East India Company. The Directors individually nominated the candidates. Many young Englishmen choosing civil services as a career option, entered into a covenant to serve the company faithfully and honestly. Such, young people were termed as 'Covenanted Servants'. Those who did not enter into a covenant were not a part of a regular graded service. However, gradually the distinctions between the two were being blurred. With the Act of 1833, the Indian Government's disciplinary control was established over the civil servants. The important issues surrounding the civil services were the age of retirement and the division of services between the executive and the judicial branches. Major issues surrounding the civil service were the age of retirement, division of service between executive and judicial branches. In 1874, the upper age limit was reduced to nineteen and the lower seventeen, which affected the Indian candidates. A system of Parallel Lines of Promotion and a covenant servant was given the choice of opting for either of them. Gradually, the demand for Indianisation of government service increased which reflected in the Lee Commission Report of 1924.

### **Financial Administration**

A revised financial system was introduced in 1833 under Lord Ellenborough. He created the post of a Finance Secretary and brought all financial operations



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under the review of the Government of India. Ellenborough also wanted to appoint a financial member and he created an office of the Comptroller General of Accounts. In 1860, a system of budget came into existence. In 1870, financial relations were decentralized when Lord Mayo made provincial government responsible for the management of local finance in some areas which were primarily of provincial interest. The Imperial Finance was relieved at this gesture of Lord Mayo since provincial governments were expected to raise additional revenue by raising local taxes.

### **Police Administration**

Earlier, a non-official force controlled by zamindars administered the law and order of the country. The daroga system introduced by Lord Cornwallis in 1792, replaced the zamindari thanedars. At the village level, the village patels were entrusted to perform the task of both the revenue collector and the police. A self-contained expert police force came into existence in the Sindh region. A superintendent, who was subordinate to the District Magistrate, was appointed in every district, under the control of the Commissioner of Police. A Police Commission was appointed by the Government in 1860, which in turn recommended the establishment of a single homogenous force of civil constabulary. The commission was headed by the Inspector General of Police who was assisted by a District Superintendent at the district level. The District Magistrate retained his judicial authority in the administration of criminal justice. The codification of penal and procedural law also was undertaken.

### **Local Administration**

Local governments are always helpful. Local governments existed in India in the villages with the village headman performing both judicial and civil functions. However, the British brought in an entirely new system of local government. Passed in 1870, the Mayo resolution stressed the need for introducing self-government in various localities to administer important services locally. Municipal Acts were passed in many provinces. The first local government was formed in Madras in 1687, termed as the Madras Corporation. Gradually, other presidency towns had their own municipalities. Regarded as the landmark in the history of local government, Lord Ripon's resolution of 1882 declared that 'It was not primarily with a view of improvement that this measure is put forward. It is chiefly desirable as an instrument of political and popular education'.

### **Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, 1919**

The British introduced the Montague-Chelmsford reforms in 1919 in order to familiarize the Indians with the form of self-government. The reforms were named after Montague, the then Secretary of State for India and Lord Chelmsford, Viceroy of India. The two met Indian leaders like Gandhi and Jinnah in order to discuss the introduction of limited self-government and

protecting the rights of minorities such as Muslims and Sikhs. The reforms formally came into effect in 1919 with an extended franchise and increased authority given to central and provincial councils. However, the viceroy was still responsible to London. The reforms did not satisfy the Indians and the British continued with their repressive policies, which were further reemphasized in the Rowlatt Acts in 1919.

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### **Preamble of the Government of India Act, 1919**

The Preamble of the Government of India Act 1919 was a huge leap in the administrative reforms. It declared, 'It is the declared policy of the Parliament to provide for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of Indian administration and for the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the Empire'. The Act in response to the preamble provided complete control over local governments and maximum representation in the provincial councils. Though, the Government of India was still responsible to the British Parliament, the Indian legislative council was enlarged and had more Indian representatives. To keep up the pace, the control of British Parliament over the Indian government was relaxed and that of the Central Government over the provincial Government was largely reduced. The main features of the Government of India Act 1919 were; (i) the council of the secretary of state was to have eight to twelve members with at least three Indian members; (ii) the Secretary of the State was to follow the directions of the Council; (iii) the Secretary of State was not allowed to interfere in matters of the provincial council; (iv) the Governors were given strict instructions about administrative affairs; (v) other than Muslims, the minorities including Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, Christians and Europeans were given right of separate electorate.

### **Central Government**

Though the Central Government was more responsive and representative, it lacked responsibility to a large extent and the governor general still remained an autocrat with complete control over the entire administration. Apparently, it seemed that the Government of England ruled India, but in actual practice, it was the Governor General who was invested with maximum powers; he could overrule the decisions of the Executive council. The Governor General was 'the Executive' in the true sense of the term and the executive councilors were merely his nominees. The entire political and the foreign departments were under his control and every bill passed required his consent. Though the legislature was broad-based, its powers were restricted and compositions faulty. Every bill passed needed the consent of the Governor. The communal representation introduced in the 1909 Act for Muslims was now extended to other communities such as Sikhs thus encouraging separatist tendencies among the Indians.



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### Machinery of 'Dyarchy at the Provinces'

A novel feature of the Montague-Chelmsford reform was the demarcation of subjects into Central and Provincial (Federalism) and the further sub-divisions at the provincial level between Reserved and Transferred subjects. Dyarchy refers to the presence of a dual government at the provinces. The reserved subjects in charge of the councilors were nominated by the Governor and the ministers were appointed by him. The reserved subjects were the key departments. The Governor exercised effective powers over the 1858 to 1919 whole administration through the Instrument of Instruction and Executive Business Rules.

### Balance Sheet of Reforms

The formation of the Congress and the commencement of reforms did show some improvement in the administrative system. The system of Dyarchy failed and the Indian National Congress (INC) boycotted the first elections (1920). Though the INC participated in the 1924 elections, its major objective was to wreck the reforms. The failure of Diarchy was inevitable as it was structurally weak. It could not put into practice the measures necessary for proper functioning of the administration. Excessive control over the finance department affected smooth functioning of the administration. The system of Diarchy also turned out to be unsuccessful. However, the reforms gave an opportunity to have a look at the administration. Few major reforms pertaining to local government and Education Social Welfare was carried out during this period. Almost in every province, the right to voting was extended to women. Despite certain drawbacks, the modifications implemented paved the way for further reforms.

#### Check Your Progress

6. Who were the Covenanted Servants?
7. What was the duty of the Police Commission appointed by the government in 1860?

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## 14.4 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS QUESTIONS

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1. In ancient India, the educational system embodied the method of oral teaching and learning texts by heart.
2. There were two main schools of education in pre-colonial India:
  - Vedic form of education
  - Education in the madrasas

3. The beginning of English press owned by Indians was witnessed as early as 1844.
4. The main reasons were:
  - There was an influx of ideas from the western world in the political, economic, social and cultural fields due to British rule.
  - Indian and European scholars and intellectuals like Max Muller, Sir William Jones, Raja Rammohan Roy, Bhagwan Lal Indraji, R.G. Bhandarkar and M.G. Ranade fuelled the potential of India's cultural and spiritual growth.
  - Great modern literature from scholars and writers such as Bankim Chandra, Keshav Chandra Sen, Madhusudan Dutt led to new ways of looking at India's tradition and history as a nation with great creativity and spirit. This led to a huge awakening of the human consciousness in India.
5. The Native Marriage Act was passed in 1872, which forbade polygamy (and also polyandry—union of one woman with many males) for Hindus. It gave a boost to the idea of widow remarriage and allowed inter caste marriage for those who did not belong to any recognized school or religious faith.
6. Many young Englishmen choosing civil services as a career option, entered into a covenant to serve the Company faithfully and honestly. Such, young people were termed as 'Covenanted Servants'.
7. A Police Commission was appointed by the Government in 1860, which in turn recommended the establishment of a single homogeneous force of civil constabulary.

## NOTES

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### 14.5 SUMMARY

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- The education of Indians had become a major topic of interest among the East India Company officials from the outset of the Company's rule in Bengal.
- Orientalism was facilitated by a number of academics who were attracted to the Indian civilization. The promotion of knowledge of Asia had attracted scholars as well to the Company's service.
- There was an attempt to learn about Indian culture through a study of scriptures in Sanskrit and Persian languages, and to use that knowledge in the matters of governance.
- The missionaries worked for the dissemination of western education. They considered the native languages and indigenous knowledge as backward. The missionaries believed that western education would lead to proselytization.

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- The main factor which tilted the scale in favour of English language and western literature was the Company's education policy finding support from the newly emerged Indian intelligentsia. These intellectuals were a product of western education, who believed that the modernization of India would be enabled through English education.
- In the General Committee of Public Instruction, there were two opposing groups who argued on the education policy in India. The orientalist led by H.T. Prinsep advocated the policy of providing encouragement to oriental literature, whereas the anglicists favoured the adoption of English as a medium of instruction.
- On 2 February 1835, Thomas Babington Macaulay issued his famous 'Minute on Indian Education'. Macaulay favoured the viewpoint of the anglicists, which also included the utilitarians, led by James Mill, who had begun to play a significant role in shaping the Company's policies.
- Many utilitarian ideas were employed in Thomas Babbington Macaulay's 'Minute on Indian Education' of 1835. The Minute was to influence education policy in India well into the next century.
- Great modern literature from scholars and writers such as Bankim Chandra, Keshav Chandra Sen, Madhusudan Dutt led to new ways of looking at India's tradition and history as a nation with great creativity and spirit. This led to a huge awakening of the human consciousness in India.
- During this period, reform movements were largely swayed by two important intellectual principles — rationalism and religious universalism.
- The British introduced in India a capitalist economy and a legal and political regime which was based on the principles of equality and freedom of the individual. Based on this, there were no inequalities based on birth, sex, caste or community. For the Indian women it was Western education, Western liberal thought, social reform movement, modern institutions, and modern means of transportation and communication that collectively played a positive role in their emancipation.
- Another social evil that dogged Hindu society was that of child marriage and Indian women suffered in silence for centuries. Two prominent reformers, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and B.M. Malabari, a Parsi rigorously opposed early marriage. It was the diligent efforts of Vidyasagar that paved the way for passing of the Act of 1860.
- Widows lived a pitiable life. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in Bengal and Malabari, Narmad, Justice Ranade and K. Natrajan in Bombay spoke

strongly for their cause and insisted that they be allowed to remarry and live a respectable life.

- The significance and far reaching effects of education cannot be underestimated. Indian social reformers of the time recognized this and emphasized education rights for women. They believed that education would make women both self-confident and knowledgeable.
- The growth of journalism in 19th century India was influenced by many social currents. Modern English education brought with it new ideas from the West. It resulted in the emergence of a new section of educated middle classes in the society and the press developed as a representative of these educated sections.
- As the British moved towards a federal form of government, the constitutional reforms reflected the change quite distinctly. This was followed by creation of new departments, reorganizing the same and setting procedures for smooth conduct of the department. Initially, administration was grouped under two broad categories.
- Prior to the Charter Act of 1833, the selection and appointments of Indian civil servants was conducted by the court of Directors of the East India Company. The Directors individually nominated the candidates. Many young Englishmen choosing civil services as a career option, entered into a covenant to serve the company faithfully and honestly. Such, young people were termed as 'Covenanted Servants'.
- During the First World War (1914–1918), Indians supported and cooperated with the British and their allies against the axis powers, and a large number of Indians lost their lives. They had hoped that in return, the British would agree to their demand for granting a dominion status to India after the war.
- After the end of the First World War, in response to the demand for Swaraj and dominion status, the British introduced another set of reforms—the Government of India Act of 1919, also known as the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919. The reforms did little to meet the aspirations of Indians, who felt short-changed after fighting alongside the British in the war. They were not ready to settle for anything less than self-rule, or Swaraj.

## NOTES

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### 14.6 KEY WORDS

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- **Anglicization:** It means to become English in appearance.
- **Grants-in-Aid:** It means the giving of funds to an institution or a person in order to subsidize a project or programme

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- **Evangelicalism:** It is a Protestant Christian movement of England of the 18th century. This movement in contrast to the Orthodox Church emphasized on personal experiences, individual reading of gospel rather than the traditions of the established church.
- **Utilitarianism:** It is the doctrine that actions are right if they are useful or for the benefit of a majority.

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## 14.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short Answer Questions

1. What effect did modern education have on the Indian society?
2. Who started Brahma Samaj and in which year?
3. Reiterate the reasons for the growth of press in India during the colonial period.
4. Write a short note on the impact of the press on society during the British rule in India.
5. Write a short-note on the development of local government in British India.

### Long Answer Questions

1. How did indigenous learning consolidate the position of the East India Company in the colonial setup?
2. Bring out the main points of debate on the controversy that took place between the anglicists and the orientalist.
3. Explain the role of Brahma Samaj
4. Discuss the impact of colonial education policies on the Indian society.
5. Discuss utilitarianism and evangelicalism.

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